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**THE INTERNATIONAL MOLDERS
UNION OF NORTH AMERICA**

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JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY STUDIES
IN
HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

No. 3

Under the Direction of the

**Departments of History, Political Economy, and
Political Science**

**THE INTERNATIONAL MOLDERS
UNION OF NORTH AMERICA**

BY

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TO
MARGARET STANSBURY STOCKTON

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PREFACE

While the writer was a graduate student at the Johns Hopkins University, he wrote a monograph on the closed shop in American trade unions. This work led to a desire to study a single representative American trade union with respect to all its policies and problems. Largely upon the advice of Professor George E. Barnett, the Molders' Union was selected for investigation.

A considerable part of the present volume has been published in installments in the *International Molders' Journal*. Parts of two articles which were published originally in the *Journal of Political Economy*: "Agreements between American and European Molders' Unions," and "The Molders and the Allied Metal Trades," are here reprinted. The writer wishes to express his appreciation of the courtesy shown by the editors of these journals in permitting him to use these articles.

The writer is indebted to all of the national officers of the Molders' Union for many helpful suggestions. In particular he wishes to express his appreciation for the interest, encouragement, and ready assistance he has received at all times from Editor John P. Frey. In preparing the manuscript for printing the writer has received valuable help from his wife.

F. T. S.

THE INTERNATIONAL MOLDERS UNION OF NORTH AMERICA

CHAPTER I

THE RISE OF THE EARLY LOCAL UNIONS

In America the iron molding industry "can hardly be said to date back farther than the year 1820," although several scattered foundries existed before that time.¹ By 1830 the number of establishments had greatly increased and many journeymen were employed at such centers as Albany, Troy, Philadelphia, New York, Taunton, and Pittsburgh. Hollowware was originally the chief product, but stoves and machinery soon came to be important parts of the general output.

The working hours of the early molders were long and indefinite. Heats were frequently run all day and all night, Sundays included, because the cupola as yet had not been introduced. Workmen casting at night often slept beside their furnaces. In some instances molders were required to furnish tools and facing materials, and frequently were compelled to pay for broken or damaged patterns. Wages were low. Payment was made partly in money and partly in store orders, truck, and due bills. In some sections molders were fined for reporting late, but were given nothing extra for overtime.

It is not remarkable that labor organized for its protection when such conditions prevailed. The date of the formation of the first local union of molders cannot be ascertained with certainty from existing records. It is clear, however, that an "Association of Moulders" existed in Philadelphia as early as 1833. On November 14, 1833,

¹ Iron Molders' Journal, October, 1888, p. 2.

the Philadelphia Trades' Union was organized. In an "Address to Mechanics and Working Men" which appeared in the *Pennsylvanian*, January 9, 1834, it was stated that "the Moulders" were among the "Trades and Societies . . . represented in the Union."² In April, 1836, the Iron Molders were reported as having made a donation of ten dollars to the Trades' Union. As other organizations contributed from fifty to three hundred dollars, it is likely that the molders had a comparatively weak union. The chief purpose of the association was doubtless that of trade regulation.

In March, 1834, the Iron Founders were among the fourteen societies sending delegates to the General Convention of the Trades of Boston.³ In February, 1835, delegates from the Albany "Founders, Machinists and Millwrights" participated in a meeting of "mechanics' associations" to form a General Trades' Union for Albany and vicinity. In 1836 the Founders and Machinists were still represented in the Union. It seems quite likely that the "founders" of Troy and Schenectady were also organized in 1835. On March 1, 1836, the United States Iron Molders' Association of the City of Pittsburg and the County of Allegheny was instituted.⁴ All of these unions were brought into existence by "hard times" and they disintegrated with the passing of economic depression.

By 1848 business conditions had again become bad, and at the same time a great increase had taken place in European immigration. Wages fell, foundries closed and unemployment followed. To meet this situation the molders first tried productive cooperation. In the fall of 1847 the Cincinnati stove-plate molders struck against a cut in wages. When the strike failed, they formed the Journeymen Molders' Union Foundry. This enterprise succeeded

² Reprinted in Commons and Sumner, *Documentary History of American Industrial Society*, vol. v, pp. 341, 348.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. vi, p. 90. Reprinted from *The Man*, March 12, 1834, p. 3.

⁴ *International Molders' Journal*, November, 1908, p. 757.

for a few years, but finally failed. That a trade union was formed at this time seems doubtful. The term Union in the name of the foundry probably meant nothing more than "cooperative." In November, 1849, a cut in wages led to a strike by unorganized Pittsburgh molders who later established cooperative foundries at Wheeling, West Virginia, Steubenville, Ohio, and Sharon, Pennsylvania. These concerns maintained their cooperative character only for a brief period and it became necessary for the defeated strikers to return to their old jobs.⁵

The next experiment tried by the molders was the formation of friendly and beneficial societies. On June 25, 1849, the Friendly Society of Iron Moulders of America was formed in New York City. "This organization, like others of its type in other cities, was conducted largely as a mutual insurance association, having provisions for sick and death benefits, but paying little attention to protective or restrictive trade regulations."⁶ In 1850 the New York molders sent a delegate to the Workingmen's Convention, or Industrial Congress, held by forty-three local benevolent and protective societies.⁷ On August 19, 1854, they obtained a charter under the New York law of 1848 providing for the incorporation of benevolent, charitable and missionary societies. The corporate name adopted was that of The Journeymen Iron Moulders' Society. The "particular business and objects of said Society" were declared to be "to promote the mutual benefit and encourage UNION among the members and associates . . . and to administer BENEVOLENT aid to the unfortunate members thereof."⁸ From this it would appear that the society considered "union" quite as important as "benevolent aid."

After 1850 a change in emphasis from fraternalism to

⁵ H. E. Hoagland, "The Rise of the Iron Molders' International Union," in *American Economic Review*, June, 1913, pp. 297-299.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

⁷ Commons, *Documentary History of American Industrial Society*, vol. viii, p. 285. Reprinted from the *New York Semi-Weekly Tribune*, June 5, 1850, p. 7.

⁸ From original charter preserved at the Cincinnati headquarters.

trade unionism took place in the molders' societies. An era of rising prices began and increases in wages were demanded. In the fall of 1852 seven Cincinnati molders formed a temporary organization which, on January 3, 1853, became the Moulders' Association. The society "was a secret order whose sole object was the promotion of fraternity among fellow craftsmen and their protection as mechanics. . . . The young organization filled a popular want and it grew apace." Its militant character is clearly evidenced by the inscription placed upon a banner devised as an emblem "round which the members might rally." This read: "Moulders' Association. Wielding a strong arm in the Mechanics' Legion, we stand united for our rights."⁹ According to tradition, the association did not hesitate to wield its "strong arm" for higher wages and better conditions whenever deemed expedient, and the benevolent features were of secondary importance. A second local union of this period which had a militant character was the Journeymen Iron Moulders' Association, Section No. 1, of the State of Pennsylvania. This society, organized at Philadelphia early in 1853, had as its main object an increase in wages.¹⁰ The years 1853 and 1854 proved to be so prosperous for laborers, that interest in organization declined and the association soon passed out of existence.

In the winter of 1854-1855 a business depression occurred. Employers found themselves burdened with excess stocks. Workmen were laid off and a period of unemployment set in, which lasted well into the year 1855. Taking advantage of the trade depression, foundrymen began to reduce wages. The Philadelphia stove and hollowware manufacturers instituted a series of reductions. On May 16, 1855, they gave notice of a reduction of fifteen per cent. The immediate result was the formation of a new association in Philadelphia which later became Local Union No. 1 of the International Union. This organization still lives and

⁹ Iron Molders' Journal, November, 1897, pp. 503-504.

¹⁰ Hoagland, p. 300.

holds the honor of being the oldest local union in the industry with a continuous existence.

Joseph A. Barford, a molder employed in Liebrant and McDowell's foundry, headed the revolt and thus became "the father of No. 1." The story as described in his own words follows:

The burden became unbearable and the worm at length turned. Smarting under a sense of injustice done me one day, I threw my rammer into the sand heap and with a terrible oath, swore I would not make another mold at such prices. I was the first man to do this and in the light of subsequent developments, base my claim to being the oldest union molder upon my action that day. James Horn was my partner that day, and I asked him if he would stay with me. He said, yes; I then went to every man in the shop and all but two agreed to make common cause.¹¹

Other shops were then notified of the plan to force an issue. Their cooperation was secured, a meeting was held, and shortly afterwards a strike was called in all but one of the stove and hollowware shops. At the end of ten weeks the firms granted an increase.

On June 16, 1855, the temporary organization formed for conducting the strike gave way to a permanent union, known as the Journeymen Stove and Hollow-ware Moulders' Union of Philadelphia. In its constitution the union stated that it proposed to secure "the elevation of the position, the maintenance of the interest of the Craft, the regulation of prices, and all other things appertaining to the Foundry business, in which the interest of the molders under its jurisdiction may be involved."¹² Provision was made for limiting the number of helpers and apprentices, but the main interest of the union lay in the preservation of a fair rate of wages.

In 1857 a molders' union was formed at Dayton, Ohio, which existed secretly for some time. In 1855 a union was formed at Reading, Pennsylvania, which disbanded within a few months. In the same year a union of brass molders,

¹¹ Iron Molders' Journal, March, 1902, p. 129.

¹² Journeymen Stove and Hollow-ware Moulders' Union of Philadelphia, Constitution and By-Laws, 1855, art. 1, sec. 2. The constitution was signed by ninety-seven charter members.

finishers, grinders and brass foundry employees was organized in Chicago. It had a short and uneventful life. On April 28, 1858, a local union was organized at Troy, New York, as the result of the work of five or six molders who had been holding secret meetings for over a year. The chief objects of the union were to maintain prices, to abolish individual contracts, and to discontinue the employment of helpers. On February 9, 1859, a molders' union was formed at Worcester, Massachusetts, and on June 2, 1859, there was organized the Journeymen Iron Molders' Union of Buffalo, composed chiefly of "stove-platers." On March 10, 1859, a union was formed at Albany by stove molders as a result of the low wages and the "rules and obnoxious conditions" growing out of the panic of 1857. The molders of Waterford, New York, were on strike in May, 1859, but there is no direct evidence that they had a union.

Data concerning all the local unions formed prior to July 5, 1859, is unobtainable. We do know, however, that on that date the molders were organized in Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Buffalo, Troy, Albany, Peekskill, Utica, Port Chester, Stamford, Providence, Worcester, Jersey City, Baltimore, Louisville, St. Louis, Wilmington, Delaware, and in two or three Canadian cities.

The history of the early unions may be summed up by saying that, except for their fraternal features, they had their rise in specific grievances such as cuts in wages and abuses of the helper system. For the first twenty years of organization they were stormy-weather affairs which disappeared with the sunshine of prosperous years. From 1855 onward, however, they began to enjoy a permanent existence and to keep watch over all the industrial interests of their members.

CHAPTER II

THE FOUNDING OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION

The panic of 1857 gave rise to conditions in the molding industry which were very similar to those which caused the first unions to be formed. Wage reductions took place and the journeymen were subjected to many "odious rules" relating to contracts, helpers, tools, rental of molding floors, payment in truck and the like. Against the evils of the day the individual local unions were able to make but little progress. Heavy decreases in membership during 1857-1858 continually threatened them with disruption. In 1857 the Philadelphia union was able to prevent a wage reduction, but severe defeats were suffered by the unions of Albany, Port Chester, and Providence in 1859 when they struck to secure the payment of wages in cash, apprentice restriction, and the restoration of 1856-1857 prices. The loss of these battles was due partly to lack of funds and partly to the ease with which the employers secured strike-breakers from near-by towns. Since many of the "scabs" came from places where other local unions existed, and since the individual unions were financially weak, the importance of securing some cooperation between the scattered organizations became manifest.

Another factor in combining the local unions was a threatened combination of employers. During the Albany strike of 1859 the foundrymen of that city organized to resist the demands made upon them and they proposed to employers in other cities the formation of a militant Founders' League. While some of the interests approached were favorable to the movement, the Philadelphia foundrymen, who seem to have had an association of their own, opposed it, feeling that they were strong enough to cope with the local situation without entering into entangling

alliances. Owing to the influence possessed by the Philadelphia element, the project was abandoned.¹ The mere suggestion of such a combination, however, must have made the journeymen realize their helplessness as long as the local unions remained separate.

In 1853 and 1854 the local unions first began to correspond.² Letters written at this time were the real beginnings of national organization. By 1858 the Troy and Philadelphia unions, especially, were in active contact with each other. In 1859 Troy voted to affiliate free of charge any molder who presented a paid-up card from the Philadelphia union.³ During the early part of 1859 the Troy molders also visited or corresponded with the local unions of Albany, Peekskill and Port Chester. On May 19 they donated fifty dollars to a group of molders on strike at Waterford. It is important to observe, finally, that when the Journeymen Iron Molders' Union of Buffalo was formed in June, 1859, it adopted a constitution similar to that of the Philadelphia union. Beyond all doubt there "had been close communication between the molders of the two cities."⁴

The strongest local union in the late fifties was that of Philadelphia. Its leading spirit was William H. Sylvis. On April 10, 1858, at Sylvis's suggestion, the Philadelphia body opened active correspondence with molders' organizations in other cities. On December 14 it appointed a committee, of which Sylvis was made secretary, which addressed a circular to all known unions, pointing out the desirability of a general convention. Since the replies to the circular uniformly favored some plan of cooperation, the committee on June 15, 1859, issued a call for a convention to meet at Philadelphia on July 5.

When the convention assembled there were in attendance

¹ Iron Molders' Journal, November, 1888, p. 2. According to one statement the Albany employers were organized as early as 1856 (Ibid., March, 1877, p. 306).

² Hoagland, p. 300.

³ Minutes, MS. Troy local union, February 17, 1859.

⁴ International Molders' Journal, November, 1911, p. 850.

thirty-two delegates representing twelve local unions.⁵ Louisville and Stamford did not send delegates, but forwarded letters pledging their support to whatever measures might be adopted. After three days' deliberation the convention adopted a provisional constitution for a "National Union of Iron Molders." In the preamble it was boldly advanced that "in the formation of a national organization, embracing every molder in the country, a union founded upon a basis broad as the land in which we live, lies our only hope." The constitution itself, however, left the National Union little more than a weak advisory organization, or an alliance of individual units. It was provided that the National Union should "possess original jurisdiction in all matters pertaining to the fellowship of the craft in the United States," and that it should "be the ultimate tribunal to which all matters of general importance to the welfare of the members of the different unions shall be referred and its decisions thereon shall be final and conclusive." To it was also reserved "the power to determine the customs and usages in regard to all matters pertaining to the craft."⁶ A "union card" was established for use by traveling members whereby they were to be admitted free of charge to all affiliated unions. Semi-annual reports were required of the locals, very moderate imposts were levied for the support of the general organization, and it was voted that any local which refused to abide by the "laws and decisions" of the national union should be expelled. The convention also raised funds for the prosecution of a strike in progress at Albany.

The first convention adjourned to meet again in six months' time at Albany. At the second meeting, which began January 10, 1860, there were present 46 delegates representing 17 local unions. On January 11 it was for-

⁵ Delegates were distributed as follows: Philadelphia, 10; Troy, 5; Albany, 5; St. Louis, Jersey City, and Providence, 2 each; Utica, Wilmington, Peekskill, Port Chester, Cincinnati, and Baltimore, 1 each.

⁶ Proceedings, 1859, p. 9.

mally adopted, on motion of Sylvis, "that this convention does now resolve itself into a national union."⁷ Thus, while July 5, 1859, is accepted by the Molders as their birthday, the general union as such was not established until 1860 when the provisional constitution of the year previous, with minor amendments, was officially accepted. Little other business of importance was transacted at this convention save that of ordering the publication of a quarterly report.

When the third convention assembled in 1861, 44 organized local unions were reported, a gain of 26 in one year. Only 42 delegates, however, were present. It was decided to number the local unions according to their seniority, Number 1 going to Philadelphia. Attention was also given to improving the machinery of the union. An international aspect was given the convention for the first time by the seating of delegates from the Canadian cities of Quebec, Toronto, Hamilton and Brantford.⁸

Hard upon the heels of the encouraging 1861 session came the Civil War. Hundreds of molders enlisted. Among those who volunteered for service were many of the national leaders, including Sylvis. The national union, deprived of its chieftains and a large per cent of its members, "almost ceased to exist" after May, 1861, and the end of that year "saw the work of the previous three years nearly undone."⁹ Many local unions rapidly disintegrated as their members left for the front. So hopeless was the situation that there was not even a call for a convention in 1862. Among the few local unions which survived the first year of the war was the Philadelphia union, which, by a hard struggle, had been able to accumulate a small fund in its treasury. About the middle of 1862 Sylvis returned from the army and once more he took charge. At his

⁷ Ibid., 1860, p. 2.

⁸ Six Canadian unions were formed in 1859, the four mentioned, together with unions in Montreal and London.

⁹ International Journal, April, 1874, p. 322; Iron Molders' Journal, February, 1889, p. 6.

suggestion the Philadelphia union appointed a committee to canvass the other surviving unions as to the desirability of calling a convention. The local unions all returned favorable replies to the convention circular. Accordingly, the Philadelphia union sent out a call for a meeting to be held at Pittsburgh on January 6, 1863.

Twenty-one delegates representing fourteen unions attended the convention. The session began literally without a head since not a single national officer was present. The great services of Sylvis were recognized by his immediate election to the presidency. From the day of that vote the Molders entered upon a new era. Under the leadership of Sylvis the constitution was largely rewritten, so far as those clauses dealing with the powers of the "general" union were concerned. These powers were enlarged and more clearly defined. The language of the constitution was altered to suggest that the general body was not so much the creature of the locals as it was their sponsor and controller. True, certain powers were spoken of as being reserved to the local unions, but these powers, as evidenced by subsequent developments, were not exempt from the encroachments of the general union.

The all important problem which confronted the Union was that of organizing the workers. Evidently this task could best be accomplished through the International Union,¹⁰ but this organization was handicapped by lack of funds. What was done, therefore, was to authorize Sylvis to devote six months to visiting every locality where there had been a local union or where there were enough molders to form such a body, and to pay his own way the best

¹⁰ As noted above, the first name assumed by the general organization was that of the National Union of Iron Molders. In 1861 the name was changed to the Iron Molders' Union of America in order to recognize the Canadian locals. In 1863 the name of the Iron Molders' International Union was assumed. In 1874 the title became the Iron Molders' Union of North America. In 1907 the name now used, the International Molders' Union of North America, was assumed to give adequate expression to existing trade and territorial jurisdiction. The central organization will hereafter be spoken of as the International Union.

he could. On February 3, 1863, Sylvis accepted the heavy responsibility placed upon him and started out upon the "tour of experiment." His old union, No. 1, gave him \$100 for his initial expenses. From time to time other local unions, as he visited them, contributed to his support. When he ran out of cash altogether he secured his transportation and living like a tramp. He covered the entire country as far west as St. Louis, except the states in rebellion, and visited some of the local unions two or three times. By his personal efforts all of the existing unions were strengthened, sixteen were reorganized and eighteen new ones were added.¹¹ Thus at the close of the year the Molders could boast once more of a vigorous and healthy organization, fifty local unions strong. For this remarkable accomplishment alone, if for no other reason, Sylvis became entitled to the distinction of being the greatest labor leader of his period.

In spite of the loss of an important strike at Philadelphia in 1863, the Union continued to make rapid progress during the next four years under the energetic leadership of Sylvis. In 1866 it was even strong enough to weather a general lockout which began at Troy and Albany, and spread westward. About 1,800 men were involved in this difficulty, which was the consummation of the organized employers' opposition that had been gradually growing since 1861. On July 27, 1868, Sylvis suddenly died. His loss was so unexpected and so seriously felt "as almost to produce a panic in the organization." Without the guidance of the "Great Chief" many unionists had "fearful forebodings of evil," but the Molders were so well established that they continued to enjoy a steady growth in numbers and discipline as the years went on. It would not be far from the truth, however, to say that the story of the Molders down to August, 1868, was the story of William H. Sylvis.

It is impossible to secure satisfactory data concerning the

¹¹ Proceedings, 1864, p. 5.

growth in the Molders' membership because the membership figures have not been published regularly. Since 1907 the union has steadily reported but 50,000 members to the American Federation of Labor in order to conceal its real strength from hostile forces. It is the writer's guess that the present membership is close to 75,000. In the following table figures are given only for convention years.

Year	Local Unions	Membership	Year	Local Unions	Membership
1859	12	700 ^a	1876	94	4,000 ^a
1860	18	1,000 ^a	1879	83	2,854
1861	44	3,000 ^b	1882	151	10,000 ^a
1863	15	2,000 ^b	1886	136	13,000 ^a
1864	76	3,500 ^b	1888	171	16,000 ^a
1865	122	6,788	1890	235	23,000 ^a
1866	111	7,366	1895	231	20,000 ^b
1867	149	8,615	1899	260	28,941
1868	113	4,885	1902	383	54,251
1870	103	3,860	1907	467	50,000
1872	107	5,000 ^a	1912	434	50,000
1874	127	7,500	1917	424	50,000

It will be observed that the panic year of 1873 hit the Molders hard. Since the slump in membership continued until 1879 a large part of the blame for the continued weakness may be attributed to the maladministration of that period. The 1893 panic also fell heavily upon the order, yet it was weathered more easily than that of 1873. The recent decrease in the number of local unions is to be attributed to consolidations.

^a Writer's estimate.

^b Union estimate.

CHAPTER III

GOVERNMENT

The International Union, its Convention and Officers.—

The first convention of the Molders' Union in 1859 was attended by representatives from twelve local unions. Each union had been asked to send one delegate from every shop under its jurisdiction. This procedure was followed till 1863 when it was provided that local unions having less than 100 members should be entitled to one delegate, and that those having over 100 and less than 300 should have two delegates. For all members over 300 an additional representative was allowed. Except for the brief period from 1884 to 1886, when a system of representation by districts obtained, the delegates have been elected by the local unions. The only important change in the system has been the lowering of the ratio of representation of the larger unions. The present rule, in force since 1902, allows one representative for every union with a membership of 200 or less and an additional representative for every additional 200 members or a "majority fraction" thereof. The lowering of the ratio has been due chiefly to the need of limiting the size of the convention both to save expenses and for parliamentary reasons. Reduction in the ratio has also been in part attributable to the fear that a few large local unions might be able to "swing the convention" contrary to the interests of the small unions. The Molders have not experienced the bitter fights between small and large unions which have occurred in other organizations, but the small unions have been jealous of losing power, and have persistently stood out for their place in the sun. In 1874 there were 87 delegates; in 1899, 221; in 1912, 405; and in 1917, 415.

Down to 1870 conventions met annually. Biennial sessions were then held till 1882, when quadrennial meetings were inaugurated. In 1886 biennial conventions were restored. In 1890 it was provided that "representative meetings" should be held every two years, "unless otherwise decided by a majority of a popular vote of the members of all local unions." In 1902 the period between conventions was lengthened to three years.¹ In the early years frequent conventions were necessary because the organization was an experiment which needed constant oversight. Gradually, however, a solid basis was achieved and adequate administrative machinery was perfected. The need for conventions then grew less. Another reason why the interval between conventions was lengthened was the cost of such meetings. Again, the increased use of the initiative and referendum obviated the need for frequent conventions, especially after 1890. Conventions have been held at five year periods since 1902.

With the Molders the convention has been both a parliament and a court. Its legislative and judicial powers have been unrestricted except where popular voting has been substituted. Yet the convention has been the creator of the popular vote, and, in that sense, has been superior to it. The exact relations between the convention and the initiative and referendum will be considered later.

The first convention created the offices of president, vice-president, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, treasurer and doorkeeper. The existing officers are a president, seven vice-presidents, a secretary, an assistant secretary, a financier, an assistant financier, seven trustees and an editor.

Practically from the outset, the president has been the acknowledged leader of the union and not a mere figure-head. He now has two functions, executive officer and chief organizer. As executive officer he presides at con-

¹ Proceedings, 1859, p. 11; 1886, pp. 45, 57; 1890, p. 73; 1902, p. 748.

ventions, decides all constitutional questions, appoints all officers pro tempore and all committees "not otherwise ordered," and countersigns all orders drawn on the treasurer. With the executive board's consent he may recall charters in localities where officers are either incompetent or negligent or when a local union fails to be self-sustaining. He may require information from any officer respecting his office. All local union by-laws must be approved by him and all circulars sent out by local unions must be sent to him for inspection and approval before they are submitted to the other unions.

As chief organizer he has "full control of the work of organization" and it is his duty "to see that every locality capable of maintaining a union is attended to and a thorough and systematic effort made to organize it." Moreover, "should any union be involved in trouble in regard to prices or principle, or in any case where a grievance is submitted to the (executive) board," the president must visit it in person or by deputy. A full report of his activities must be submitted to each convention and to each meeting of the executive board.² For many years the president acted more as chief organizer than as executive officer. Gradually, however, his duties as executive officer have increased to such an extent that most of his time is required at headquarters.

Especially during the early years of the union the president stretched his authority whenever occasion required. President Sylvis once declared that "should the emergency demand it," he "would lay the constitution on the shelf and do what seemed necessary to save the organization, believing that it was better to have an organization without a constitution than a constitution without an organization." In view of such crises Sylvis believed that "large dis-

² Constitution, 1917, art. 4, secs. 4, 5. In 1867 a "deputy president" was temporarily created for the Pacific Coast on account of its inaccessibility. He was given all the powers of the president and was required to report to headquarters at least every three months.

cretionary powers" should be lodged in his office so that the union might be largely under the control of "one mind."³ At present, if extraordinary circumstances require that a strict interpretation of the constitution be disregarded, the executive board decides what action is to be taken.

Until 1863 each local union chose a vice-president for the national organization from among its representatives at the convention. Where a union had but one delegate he served as vice-president and he also filled the office of corresponding secretary. In 1863 a vice-president for the national union as a whole was elected although the old system of having a vice-president and corresponding representative from each local union was continued. In 1864 two additional general vice-presidents were elected, and the number has been increased from time to time.

The early vice-presidents had no very specific duties to perform. Occasionally they were deputized to act in the president's place when the latter was unable to attend personally to some business of his office. Since 1890 they have been "assistant organizers" subordinate to the president. Together with their chief they now promote the work of organizing new local unions⁴ and serve as the "diplomats and negotiators" of the organization. They are the president's deputies in handling important grievances which the latter lacks time to manage. Their wide experience in this connection has made them wise counselors of local unions and skilled interpreters of agreements. As "legislative agents" some of the vice-presidents have also done considerable service. Like the staff of a com-

³ Proceedings, 1867, p. 11. Sylvis was accused at this time of exceeding his authority in levying a voluntary five per cent tax on local unions to finance a strike and in appointing a deputy treasurer for the territory west of the Mobile-Detroit line. He also acted without constitutional authority in maintaining a "secret service" to keep him informed of hostile employers' plans. The convention refused to pay the bill incurred by this action, but upheld the tax.

⁴ At present the actual task of organizing largely falls upon local business agents and special organizers.

mander-in-chief, the vice-presidents may be sent to any part of the field. It has become customary to confine them for a part of their time to certain districts or to certain branches of the trade where their services are most useful. It is not the policy of the organization, however, to limit its vice-presidents to special fields since their value is greatly increased if they have a wide grasp of affairs. Suggestions to the effect that each branch of the trade be represented by a vice-president have been rejected on the ground that the union stands for the molding trade as a whole and not for a group of trade branches. It has so happened, however, that the various branches have been fairly well represented on the staff.

At the first convention the president and the vice-presidents were constituted a "national executive committee" to meet at the call of the president, "whenever it may be considered necessary by any local union." When duly convened the committee became "invested with all the authority of the national union, the making of laws excepted."⁵ This arrangement was continued only for a short time, as it was impossible to assemble the widely scattered vice-presidents. In 1867 the four general vice-presidents were named a board of trustees to hold the treasurer's bond. This was the beginning of the present executive board or board of trustees, as it is sometimes called. In 1876 we find the board composed of "three members in good standing, elected by the convention, other than officers," who held the treasurer's bond and, in conjunction with the president, attended to the investment of all union funds. The board was given power, individually or jointly, to require "full and detailed statements" from the president and treasurer concerning their financial transactions. Its members could also "make official statements through the *Journal* on any matter connected with their offices."⁶ Should a vacancy occur in any office, other than that of

⁵ Proceedings, 1859, p. 10.

⁶ Ibid., 1876, p. 82.

president or corresponding secretary, or should any officer fail to perform his duty for the space of three months, the president was to declare the office vacant and the trustees were to fill the vacancy. To the president and the vice-presidents was left the power of declaring an end to any strike whenever they felt satisfied that such strike was lost. If charges were preferred against an elective international officer, the vice-presidents and the trustees sat as an "executive board" to try the case.

In 1878 a new and powerful executive board came into existence. It was composed of the four vice-presidents and the three trustees. To this body, acting in conjunction with the president, were granted all "executive powers" of the union, except when conventions were in session. The president's position was made something like that of a corporation head dealing with his board of directors. Thus, he was required to secure the consent of the executive board before visiting and inspecting subordinate unions, and to "lay all matters of interest" to the union before the board. He was also required to share with the board the power to decide "the meaning and intent" of any section of the constitution. The board was authorized to hear all charges preferred against elective officers of the union, to fill vacancies in office, and to terminate strikes.⁷ The trustees as a separate body were left to deal only with financial matters while the vice-presidents as such were confined to organizing and negotiation under the direction of the president. The new board soon found itself in conflict with President Saffin who denied it the right to supervise his actions. Since the constitution explicitly granted it supervisory authority, the board insisted upon exercising its functions. The dispute became heated and the board finally preferred charges of embezzlement against the president, tried his case, found a verdict of guilty, and secured from the local unions a vote declaring the office of president vacant. After this episode the right of the board to have

⁷ Ibid., 1878, pp. 42, 44, 48-50.

full control over all matters of interest to the union went unchallenged.

The present executive board is based on legislation enacted in 1886. It is composed of the president and the trustees, of whom there are seven. The president sits with the board but does not vote except where a tie occurs through the death, resignation, or removal of a member. The board decides all policies of the union, except when conventions are in session, has supervision over all officers, conference boards and local unions, hears appeals from decisions by the president, and approves or vetoes proposed amendments to the constitution offered by local unions for referendum vote.⁸ The trustees as such still have supervision over the finances, including the payment of benefits of various kinds. So closely is the work of the trustees and executive board related that the two bodies might as well be consolidated under a single name. At present the board meets frequently, often for sessions lasting for a week or ten days.

The Initiative and Referendum.—When the national union was formed in 1859 it was provided that its constitution might be amended only at a "stated meeting" of the union. Two years later the committee on constitution was instructed to "inquire into the expediency of so amending the constitution as to render the sanction of a majority of the subordinate unions necessary for any future amend-

⁸ "The board of trustees, more commonly known as the executive board, consists of members chosen by a convention and selected with a view not only to their ability to fill the important duties that will fall to their share, but to represent as nearly as possible every section of our broad jurisdiction and its diversified interests. Their duties do not bring them so clearly in the limelight; their names are not brought so prominently before our members or the community; but, none-the-less, their duties are as important as those of any officer. They are the watchdogs over the funds of our organization; they are the court of final appeal of all questions affecting the laws of our organization between conventions; they are the administrators of the policies of the convention that selected them and, finally, they have the deciding voice in the action to be taken by local unions in defending our principles or in bettering their conditions. They are, in a word, the final and supreme authority in all matters affecting the interest or welfare of our membership, excepting only the convention itself" (International Molders' Journal, August, 1913, p. 671).

ment or alteration.”⁹ It was not until 1868, however, that provision was made for amending the constitution by popular action. It was now provided that five or more local unions might initiate a constitutional change by proposing an amendment to the general president. The latter was then ordered to “issue a circular to each union containing the said amendment, the vote to be taken under such regulations as the president may adopt, the vote in all cases to be published in the *Journal*, or by circular, . . . each union to have as many votes as . . . representatives.” To carry a measure in this way a three-fourths majority was required.¹⁰

In 1879 the approval of the executive board was required before a circular containing a proposal for constitutional amendment could be issued. Since it was believed that this plan safeguarded the organization against rash schemes, a bare majority of the popular vote was substituted for a three-fourths majority of the local unions to carry a submitted measure and a single subordinate union was allowed to initiate constitutional alterations. At the 1888 convention it was provided that proposals should “be left open for discussion in the *Journal* for three successive issues” before a vote was taken.¹¹ In 1895 it was stipulated that “in the event of a proposed amendment not receiving the sanction of the executive board, on the appeal of ten local unions, the executive board shall publish in the *Journal* their reasons for disapproval, and the secretary shall send it to local unions in circular form.”¹² This plan still obtains, except that it takes twelve unions to carry an appeal over the heads of the executive board and not more than five of these unions can belong to the same conference board. In practice the executive board occasionally acts on its own account in amending a proposed amendment, and it has even offered amendments upon its own initiative. Prior to 1895 there were very few instances where con-

⁹ Proceedings, 1861, pp. 17, 29.

¹⁰ Ibid., 1868, p. 72.

¹¹ Constitution, 1888, art. 16, sec. 1.

¹² Ibid., 1895, art. 15, sec. 1.

stitutional amendments were initiated by local unions for admission to popular vote, but since that date numerous amendments have been submitted.

In 1879 it became necessary for the executive board to call an extraordinary session of the union to hear charges against President Saffin. In the absence of a constitutional provision the board canvassed the local unions and secured their consent to a proposal for a special convention. To provide against future contingencies a rule was passed that "should it become necessary to hold a special convention, in order to be legal, it must have the sanction of the majority of the executive board and two thirds of the local unions voting on the same."¹⁸ In 1895 a popular vote was substituted for a local-union vote, and in 1902 it was provided that a request for a special convention must be initiated by at least five local unions. No special convention, it may be said, has been authorized since 1879. The referendum has also been introduced to uphold or to reject the findings of the executive board after a trial of charges against international officers. Until 1897 the vote on such questions was by local unions and each union had as many votes as it was entitled to in convention.

Finally, the convention at odd times has put to referendum questions of major importance upon which the vote of the membership has been desired. For example, proposals for an eight-hour day and for the abolition of piecework have been thus submitted. From the foregoing account it will be observed that the Molders have pursued varied methods of voting under the referendum rules. In 1897 procedure was simplified by the requirement that all measures submitted to the membership must be decided by popular vote.

Since 1879 certain members of the union have advocated the complete substitution of the initiative and referendum for the convention system. The convention has been condemned as too costly and as lacking in the fundamental

¹⁸ Ibid., 1879, art. 15, sec. 4.

elements of democracy. The defenders of the convention, however, have always outnumbered its antagonists. They have pointed to the small vote obtained on issues submitted to a referendum as an indication of a tendency to let things "be decided by default, as it were," owing to the general idea of depending too much upon "the judgment or volition of international officers."¹⁴ When a vote was taken on the advisability of holding a convention in 1897 there appeared "the discouraging spectacle of less than one third of the entire membership recording themselves as either in favor of or against, and 28 local unions out of 231 vouchsafing no expression whatever."¹⁵ Again, when local union No. 31 of Detroit submitted various amendments to the constitution on one occasion, it took the trouble to send texts of the proposals to each member of the entire union, but even then only one third of the voting strength was called out. In view of these facts, it has been contended that the referendum enables a minority to make decisions and that "indifference on the part of those possessing the franchise seems to be one of the greatest weaknesses of the system."¹⁶

Attention has also been called to the need of the convention as a "safety valve" for the union. A widely scattered membership, representing different interests, has required "that before intelligent action can be taken upon any problem affecting the organization, all the information which can be secured upon the subject must be presented, . . . supplemented by the advice and suggestions of those members who have made a special study of the question . . . or who, as officers, have had to contend with it."¹⁷ Opportunity for such presentation, it has been urged, has existed only at the convention where clashing opinions can be

¹⁴ Iron Molders' Journal, December, 1899, p. 641.

¹⁵ Ibid., April, 1897, p. 172.

¹⁶ Perhaps the most notable vote was polled in 1900 when 13,163 members expressed their views on the adoption of an eight-hour day.

¹⁷ International Molders' Journal, November, 1914, p. 899.

harmonized, friction allayed and "narrow provincialism removed." The convention has also been defended as the sole device for obtaining a systematic revision of the constitution and as the one place where important reforms, such as the high-dues plan of 1895, can be secured.

Summing up the Molders' policy respecting the initiative and referendum, we may say that they have perfected an "effective balance" between these instruments and the representative assembly. The latter handles the majority of alterations found necessary in the rules of the organization and systematizes its laws. Yet the "ultimate decision on any question" rests in the hands of the entire membership. Direct legislation enables the union to correct from time to time any error the convention may commit or to fill in gaps that may be overlooked. "In any crisis or whenever a majority believes that a change should take place" the membership may work its will. The decisions of the executive board upon amendments and charges may be overturned and special conventions may be called if the organization so desires.¹⁸

Since 1868 it has frequently been proposed that the international officers be nominated by local unions and elected by the entire membership. In 1912, especially, the question was much debated. Those who have favored the direct nomination and election of the general officers formerly argued about the possibilities afforded thereby to avoid "that horrible monster, 'ring rule,'" ¹⁹ claiming that it was comparatively easy for the officers to influence conventions in favor of their reelection by playing politics. At present one hears more about the fundamental democracy involved in giving every member a vote in choosing his leaders. It may be questioned, however, whether political theory has been entirely divorced from practical politics by those who have taken their stand for direct elections. The "outs" have doubtless seen some chance for overcoming the "ins"

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Iron Molders' Journal, September, 1896, p. 376.

by such a system. The sentiment of the majority of the members has always been opposed to the popular nomination and election of officers. The arguments against direct elections and in favor of the convention system were well stated by Editor Frey in 1913. Mr. Frey upheld the election of officers through the convention because it allowed leaders to prove their worth before a body of competent critics, because it decreased rather than increased personal politics, because direct elections would involve great expense, whenever a multiplicity of candidates should require several ballots to be taken, and because experience with direct elections had demonstrated the fact that only a minority of the members voted.²⁰

No comment has been made in this chapter upon the use of the referendum in the authorization of strikes. This question has been treated in another connection.²¹

District Unions.—As early as 1863 it was proposed that the Molders form state or district unions, subordinate to the international union. It was argued that such organizations could reduce expenses by handling all local matters, thereby leaving the general convention and officers free to give all their time to general problems. During the early '80's, especially, there was a growing feeling that the union was organized on incorrect principles and that the exercise of more local autonomy was desirable. Finally, in 1886, the convention decided to experiment with the district system and a form of organization was created after the pattern of the government of the United States with its federal, state and local units. District unions with the necessary officers were authorized in each state and Canadian province having three or more local unions. They were given power to elect most of the delegates to the general convention, to supervise and control local unions within their district, to

²⁰ International Molders' Journal, August, 1913, p. 666. Conference boards have sometimes chosen business agents by popular nomination and election. At one election held by the Pittsburgh board only 507 ballots were cast out of a total membership of 2,646.

²¹ See pp. 101-105.

arbitrate trade disputes, to send out district organizers, to raise funds in any way not in conflict with the rules of the International, and to initiate molders located in isolated places and to attach them to the nearest local unions.²² In eight States and in some of the Canadian provinces district organizations were perfected. So far as accomplishments were concerned, they did little more than to elect officers, to endorse the union label and to elect statisticians to collect information about wages and prices. The uselessness of the district unions, coupled with a reaction in favor of centralized authority, led to their overthrow in 1888 by a referendum vote.²³

Conference Boards.—District or state unions failed because they were not adjusted to economic need. State lines did not coincide with trade boundaries. A correct basis of organization for bodies intermediary between the international and the local unions was finally found in conference boards composed of local unions situated in the same industrial area.

The first conference board was formed in New York City and vicinity in January, 1891. During the eighties the Knights of Labor were so active in that locality as to weaken the trade unions. As a result, several foundrymen made an effort to increase hours and reduce wages. "It was this condition of affairs that paved the way for and brought about the organization of the conference board, so that the representatives of the strong locals could meet with those of the weaker ones, ascertain their conditions, needs, etc., discuss the situation and render them assistance whenever and wherever possible."²⁴ In 1892 four local unions in the Chicago district formed a council "to bring about a more harmonious feeling between the members and the different branches, stove, machinery, and bench." A

²² Proceedings, 1886, pp. 45, 49, 57.

²³ Proposals for "home rule" and for "districting the International Union" were unsuccessfully made on several occasions after 1888.

²⁴ Iron Molders' Journal, January, 1897, p. 6.

headquarters was established with a paid secretary in charge whose chief duty it was to maintain an employment bureau for union members.²⁵ Three unions in Dayton, Ohio, formed a council in 1894 in order to keep in closer touch with each other.

Official international recognition was granted in 1895 to "local executive boards" which were authorized in each locality where more than one union existed, for the purpose of adjusting all differences between the unions and of agreeing upon a scale of wages. In 1899 rules were adopted for the formation and regulation of conference boards. Whenever the members of local unions "within a reasonable radius of a good central point, with a total membership of 1,000 or more," decided to form a board, it was to be officially recognized by the International Union. All by-laws of conference boards were to be approved by the international president, whose sanction was also required to confirm the appointment of any business agent or employee.²⁶

Local autonomy prevailed at first with respect to the organization, membership and jurisdiction of the boards, but before long it seemed wise to establish international control over all features of their organization. In 1907 all local unions were compelled to join the conference board of their district, if one existed. The executive board was empowered to establish conference boards wherever it saw fit, to decide how large the combined membership of several local unions should be in order to justify their organization under a conference plan, and to determine the territorial jurisdiction of each conference board. In 1912 two more important checks upon conference boards were imposed when the president and executive board were authorized to remove business agents for inefficiency and to revoke the charters of conference boards which failed to be self-sustaining.

²⁵ Ibid., August, 1892, p. 5.

²⁶ Proceedings, 1899, p. 187.

Only five or six boards were organized prior to 1900. In 1902 there were fourteen boards, in 1907 sixteen, in 1912 eighteen, and in 1918 eighteen. Increases in the number of boards since 1907 have been chiefly due to splitting up organizations so large as to be unwieldy. Thus, in 1913 it was decided that better results could be obtained by dividing New England into the three districts of Boston and vicinity, the Connecticut Valley, and Eastern New England. The remaining fifteen boards are known as those of New York, Buffalo, Central New York, Pittsburgh, Eastern Pennsylvania, Chicago, Detroit, Lower Michigan, St. Louis, Central Ohio, Cleveland, the Miami Valley, Indiana, Northern California, and Ontario. Boards for the South have frequently been suggested, but so far conditions have not been ripe for their establishment. In two or three cases boards have been discontinued because they have not been self-sustaining. In 1917 the number of unions constituting the board ranged from two in Northern California to twenty-seven in Central New York and Eastern Pennsylvania. The membership varied from 1,187 for Northern California to 3,857 for New York. The eighteen boards had a total membership of 40,658.

Conference boards have primarily had the duty of organizing molders and securing harmony of action among the affiliated local unions. They have not had power to initiate or settle strikes or to modify any national policy. The work of organizing has been largely carried on by business agents, hired and paid by the boards. Besides acting as an organizer the business agent serves as a sort of employment-bureau manager and assists in the settlement of grievances and the conduct of strikes. He is often given authority to examine the books of officers of affiliated local unions and generally he is required to visit local unions in his jurisdiction at stated intervals. Suspended members may pay their debts to him and be reinstated. For all his actions he is immediately responsible to the board's executive committee which controls his activities. The committee usually grants him considerable latitude.

The Local Union.—Local union procedure has been compared to government by mass meeting. Like all other attempts at a pure democracy, however, the local union has found it necessary to delegate certain powers to its officers and committees. Little change has been made in the number and duties of officers in molders' local unions since the early years. The first organizations each had a president, a vice-president, a recording secretary, a financial secretary, and a treasurer. It is unnecessary to define the duties of these officers. When the International Union was formed, the local office of corresponding representative was created to handle all communications with the central office and with other bodies, and to make monthly reports to the international president on all important facts relative to changes in membership, the condition of employment, moneys collected, etc. At present it is customary for local unions to have, besides the officers mentioned, a statistician and three or five trustees. The statistician is supposed to secure statistics upon all facts of interest to the trade from all open, union, and non-union shops under the jurisdiction of his union. He is assisted in his duties by one member appointed from each shop. The trustees exercise general supervision over the property of the union, invest its surplus funds, examine all bills presented for payment, hold officers' bonds, audit accounts and perform similar duties. A few local unions have also employed business agents at different times.²⁷ For inefficiency or neglect of duty local officers can be removed by the international president with the consent of the executive board.

Local unions have but few standing committees. In one sense the shop or price committees are local-union committees, yet their work is related primarily to their respective foundries. Special committees, such as those appointed

²⁷ In 1907 there were eight local-union business agents. The tendency has been to substitute conference-board agents for local agents. It is of interest to note that the Albany union in 1860 urged the appointment of "agents" to organize the trade and to secure the amicable settlement of disputes.

to visit sick members, are named from time to time. Since 1863 local unions have been chartered by the International Union. All local by-laws "and all amendments thereto, except such as relate to time and place of meeting," must be submitted to the general president before being printed, "for examination, correction, and approval."²⁸ For many years uniform by-laws have been suggested, but it has seemed best to allow some leeway to meet local conditions.

The Shop.—Some form of shop organization has always obtained among the Molders. In 1855 the Philadelphia union provided that the members in each foundry should select from their number three journeymen to serve as "an executive committee of the foundry." The committee was ordered "to prepare and keep a list of articles that are made by the piece and give their opinion as to the price that should be paid."²⁹ Shop members were also required to elect one representative on a "financial committee" of the local union. It became the duty of this man to collect extra assessments, to invite non-members to join the union and to do such other work as might be required of him. Similar committees existed in the Buffalo union in 1859. "Price," "finance," or "shop committees" have been usual in every important union foundry to the present. At present they exercise a general supervision over members in the shop, report all violations of the rules, and all other matters of interest to the union. Sometimes they act as price committees and inspect union cards. In many shops, however, a special "collector" or "steward" attends to the collection of all dues, fines and assessments. Each shop elects its own committee or collector. The shop committee usually consists of three men, but in some cases it is composed of only one member, called "the chairman of the shop."

²⁸ Constitution, 1867, art. 10, sec. 3.

²⁹ Journeymen Stove and Hollow-ware Moulders' Union of Philadelphia, Constitution and By-Laws, 1855, art. 3, sec. 3; art. 4, sec. 6.

CHAPTER IV

JURISDICTION

Territorial Jurisdiction.—The Molders have always claimed jurisdiction over the entire United States and on several occasions they have had to fight sectional movements. During the sixties a scheme for dividing the organization into two "separate and distinct branches, the East and the West," interested a small element of the membership which claimed to dislike "foreign interference." The dangers of the proposal were soon seen and its backers were so sternly rebuked that the matter was dropped.¹ In 1884 plans to set up four separate unions in the United States met with a like fate. In each instance sectional jealousy was the cause of the suggested division.

In 1860 Canadian local unions in Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, Brantford and London were affiliated. By this action the Molders became an international union, the first of its kind in the entire world. Since 1860 the union has claimed complete jurisdiction over Canada, where, at the present time, there are thirty-one local unions. In 1884 it was proposed that the Canadian locals secede and form a national union of their own in order, as it was said, to have their affairs looked after more effectively. This movement was stopped almost before it was started, so little good did the Canadian molders see in it. At present there is a small group of Canadian workers who favor national autonomy, but no molders are known to belong to it. In 1888 application for a charter was received from Mexico City where a number of union molders were working. The petition was denied. The hostility of the government to trade unionism during the Diaz regime and the turbulent times of

¹ International Journal, May, 1874, p. 327.

later days have continued to make the invasion of Mexico unprofitable. Most of the members working in that country now deposit their cards at Douglas, Arizona. In 1900 union molders working in Honolulu requested that a charter be given them. The executive board felt at first that it would be too expensive to administer so remote a local union, but in 1901 it finally granted the petition. One year later the charter was withdrawn because the anticipated difficulties proved too formidable. The Molders still retain jurisdiction over the Hawaiian Islands, but members working there deposit their cards at San Francisco. To aid its members in dealing more effectively with government officials in the Canal Zone, the union granted a charter in 1906 to Gorgona (renamed Balboa) where the chief construction and repair shops along the Canal were located. The Molders have never given favorable consideration to applications for charters in Alaska, Newfoundland, Cuba, Porto Rico or the Philippine Islands since the cost of administration would be out of proportion to the benefits derived by the small number of members obtainable in these places.

The first rule which dealt with the jurisdiction of local unions read as follows:

Should the molders of any city deem it expedient to form unions of the separate branches of the trade, such unions will be recognized and respected by the National Union, *Provided*, that no more than one union in each department, viz., one union of Machinery Molders, and one union of Stove and Hollow Ware Molders, shall be recognized in any one city or town.²

Within a few years separate unions of bench molders were also authorized. In 1887 hollowware molders were allowed to form separate local unions, but as they did not take advantage of the privilege the action was rescinded in 1888. In the same year, however, brass molders were allowed separate local unions. In 1899 a general rule specifying that the approval of the president and executive board

² Proceedings, 1859, p. 12.

must be obtained before more than one union could be established in a locality was adopted. Machine operators, brass molders, agricultural molders, malleable-iron molders and heater-work molders were given charters wherever the conditions justified. A few specialized workers, such as radiator molders, have not been granted separate charters. After the amalgamation with the Core Makers in 1903 it was thought best by the executive board to merge the newly acquired coremakers' unions with the machinery-molders' unions, since in practically all matters taken up with employers the two groups had to act jointly. At present all but five out of the nineteen original coremakers' unions have surrendered their charters. Since 1912 the president and executive board have been authorized to combine local unions where it seems expedient to do so. In general, it is the policy of the Molders to have as few unions as possible in any one locality in order to secure maximum solidarity and efficiency.

Since 1861 the molding trade has been entered by a considerable number of German, Bohemian, Polish and Hungarian immigrants. Because many of these foreigners could not speak English, it was deemed wise at one time to form them into local unions of their own, regardless of the branches of the trade represented. The first hint of such a policy appeared in 1888 when it was proposed, unsuccessfully, to give the president power "to organize a German union where there are Germans enough to support it."⁸ In 1894 a local union of Poles was formed at Cleveland and in 1900 a union composed exclusively of Bohemians was chartered there. After a brief trial the union merged these two local unions with other Cleveland unions and decided to grant no more charters on the basis of nationality, since it had been discovered that unity in shop control and "Americanization" could only be secured by placing foreigners in the same local unions with other employees from the same establishments.

⁸ Ibid., 1888, p. 74.

In the early days local unions were restricted in their territorial jurisdiction to a single city or town. At present, however, extensive jurisdictions covering entire Canadian provinces and large parts of American States are possessed by four or five unions. For example, the Winnipeg union has jurisdiction over all foundry centers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the Waycross, Georgia, union has jurisdiction over Southern Georgia and Florida, and the San Francisco union has jurisdiction over the Golden Gate territory, Honolulu, mining camps as far east as Nevada, and all California except San Diego, Los Angeles and Sacramento. It is quite common today for a local union to have jurisdiction over all towns in a single county.

Trade Jurisdiction.—The convention of 1859 was called by local organizations composed entirely of molders of grey iron from the machinery and the stove and hollowware branches of the trade.⁴ As the molding trade expanded, the union began to extend its jurisdiction so that in time it became a molders' organization in the fullest sense. The first extension of trade jurisdiction took place in 1865 when bench molders and malleable-iron molders were made eligible for membership. Two years later brass molders were included. No further additions to trade jurisdiction were made until 1899, when it was resolved that the union should "seek to establish . . . jurisdiction over the molding-machine operator and all those who work at molding in the numerous subdivisions" into which the specialization of the trade had divided it.⁵ In 1902 the jurisdiction of the union was comprehensively defined by the statement that it should extend "over the trade of molding in all its branches and subdivisions, including coremaking."⁶

Strict trade autonomy has always appealed to a majority of the membership, yet agitation for an industrial form of

⁴ All but one of the fourteen unions represented were organizations of "stove-platers."

⁵ Constitution, 1899, Standing Resolution No. 38, p. 55. In 1902 special mention was made of the radiator molder.

⁶ Ibid., 1902, art. 1, sec. 2.

organization has been in evidence since 1880, when it was advocated that the union should bring under its control "every skilled worker in and around the foundry."⁷ It was argued that in the stove industry strikes often failed because molders were not supported by pattern makers, mounters, and melters. In the machinery branch the molders, it was claimed, needed the direct aid of allied trades, such as the machinists, blacksmiths, pattern makers, and boilermakers. By 1912 the friends of a metal-trades' amalgamation had become so numerous that ten resolutions in all were offered in the convention of that year for some form of consolidation. All of the resolutions, after long discussion, failed of adoption, although thirty-two delegates voted in favor of a referendum on the issue of admitting all workers "in and around foundries."⁸ Again, in 1915, a referendum vote was taken on the general issue of "amalgamation." The executive board vigorously expressed itself in favor of maintaining the independent existence of the union and the membership defeated the proposed measure by an overwhelming majority. The measure failed to carry chiefly because the members felt that a strong union could gain nothing by fusion with weaker ones.⁹

Jurisdiction Disputes.—The Molders have had their share of jurisdiction disputes and secessions. Unlike many other organizations they have emerged successfully from each conflict. The history of the chief disputes follows:

(1) *The Knights of Labor.* From 1882 to 1885 many molders joined local assemblies of the Order of the Knights of Labor. In 1882 some machinery molders in Pittsburgh, who refused to join the union, organized under the Knights. In 1883 prominent members of local union No. 8 of Albany secretly organized Molders' Local Assembly No. 2791. The Knights were so powerful throughout the country that

⁷ Iron Molders' Journal, June, 1880, p. 10.

⁸ Proceedings, 1912, pp. 126, 137, 141, 148, 155, 159, 167, 169, 175, 181, 209, 234, 244.

⁹ For further discussion of the inter-union relations of the Molders see pp. 108-113.

the Albany men, whose local union was none too strong, believed affiliation with them to be expedient. A local assembly of the Knights formed at Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1885, was joined by several molders, as the local union there had ceased to exist. Indianapolis machinery molders in 1885 temporarily took out a charter in the Order. Many individual molders belonged to the Knights and some of these held cards in the union as well.

The general attitude of the union toward the Order, down to the middle of 1886, was well stated by the editor of the *Iron Molders' Journal* in that year when he said: "The Knights of Labor is an organization which was started for the purpose of organizing all branches of unorganized labor, and we have on all occasions given them all the support in our power."¹⁰ In the early part of 1886, however, trouble arose. The Knights were accused of admitting to membership expelled and suspended union molders, and were warned that the union would not tolerate such a policy, since it threatened discipline and made scabbing easy. In reply to the complaints made by the Molders and by other trade unions, the leader of the Knights asserted that personally he had "always held that the man who proved untrue to his Trade Union was unfit for membership in the Knights" and that he believed the majority of his membership felt likewise.¹¹ In spite of this statement, however, "unfair" molders continued to join the Order.

Although the Molders took issue with the membership policy of the Knights, there was still a considerable element in the union which believed that a break with the Order would be fatal to the labor movement. Some members urged amalgamation with the Knights as the best way out of the difficulty. They believed, moreover, that the all-inclusive unionism represented by the latter was the ideal form of organization. A resolution for amalgamation was introduced in the 1886 convention. After long debate it

¹⁰ *Iron Molders' Journal*, February, 1886, p. 14.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, April, 1886, p. 5.

was overwhelmingly defeated by a vote of 114 to 27 as "inexpedient, unwise and unnecessary." Another resolution giving the president and executive board power to issue a circular for a popular vote upon the question was also defeated.¹²

On May 17, 1886, a conference of thirty-two national union officers, including President Fitzpatrick of the Molders, framed several charges against the Knights, such as aiding unfair employers, scabbing, and ignoring union scales and hours. An agreement was prepared for submission to the Knights, according to which the latter were to discipline any member or local organization guilty of unfair practices. While the Knights received the agreement in a "spirit of friendship," they did not put it into effect. Eventually they began to fight the unions, especially the Cigar Makers, quite openly. At the 1886 convention the executive board was instructed to demand of the Knights that they suspend all members who were suspended or expelled unionists, and it was ordered that a committee be appointed to act with a committee from the Knights to consider disputes that might arise in the future. The Knights, however, remained unmoved by the adoption of these resolutions.

In the following year the situation gradually became worse. In various parts of the country relations became more and more strained over questions of various kinds. At New Haven six members of the Knights were discharged from a foundry, whereupon the local assembly called a strike and declared the shop closed to organized labor. Since the strike had not been authorized by the executive board, several union molders in the shop returned to work before the difficulty was settled. At once they were branded as scabs by the local assembly. At Albany friction arose in 1887 when the Knights deprived the union of control over the Rathbone stove shop. The Bridge and Beach lockout at St. Louis in 1887 was another cause for trouble between

¹² Proceedings, 1886, pp. 17-20, 33.

the two organizations. During this dispute members of the Knights continued to use St. Louis patterns while all over the country union molders refused to handle them. As the result of their experiences with the Knights throughout the country, the Molders felt that they had many just grievances against them and that the only safe thing to do was to drive the Knights entirely out of the foundry. By combining with other trade unions the Molders were able to achieve this end practically by 1890. After that date the Knights continued to retain a few molders in their membership but so few as to cause no serious clashes with the union.

(2) *The Brotherhood of Machinery Molders.* Although machinery molders greatly outnumbered stove molders in the United States during the eighties, the latter were the more thoroughly organized. So many strikes had been supported in the stove branch that machinery molders had begun to feel that it was useless for them to unionize since only stove molders, apparently, could obtain backing for their demands. At the convention of 1882 representatives from machinery molders' local unions protested against the prevailing strike policy, but they failed to effect a change because the stove manufacturers at this time were so aggressive that it was deemed best to continue the fight upon them without expending strike funds in less critical fields.

The more radical machinery molders now determined upon revolt. Local union No. 244 of Detroit led the way by issuing a call to other local unions in the machinery branch for a convention to meet at Detroit on February 5, 1883. Separate organization of the machinery molders was advocated on the grounds "that each branch of the trade could best legislate for its own wants and necessities; and further, that the burden of strikes . . . had been borne by the machinery trade."¹⁸ Only two unions responded to the call. In conjunction with No. 244, these organizations seceded from the union and formed the International Brother-

¹⁸ Iron Molders' Journal, June, 1890, p. 4.

hood of Machinery Molders. For a year or two the new organization made some progress as a few other machinery molders' local unions joined its ranks. By 1886, however, a majority of the seceding local unions had returned to the Molders and for a time the Brotherhood was almost dead. In August, 1887, John Penton, later commissioner for the National Founders' Association, became the Brotherhood's president. Under his leadership new life resulted. In 1888 the first real convention was held and an official journal was started. In 1892 eighty-two local unions were reported, chiefly in the territory west of Pittsburgh.¹⁴

The union's executive board had at once suspended No. 244, but it did not discipline any other secessionists. Conciliatory proceedings prevailed for a half-dozen years, as the union was none too strong during this period. In 1886 the union extended a "cordial invitation" to the secessionists again to "enroll themselves under the banner of our organization."¹⁵ In 1888 the convention refused to sustain a presidential decision that a molder could not belong to both the union and the Brotherhood. As it grew in membership, however, the Brotherhood began to excite the active hostility of the union. The latter first tried to argue its rival out of existence by asserting that "the fundamental principles of trade organizations" led not "toward division . . . into little insignificant bodies because of their specialties," but "rather toward consolidation."¹⁶ In reply, the outlaws heaped contempt upon the old organization and bitterly denounced its "tyrannical" methods. Since settlement could not be secured by discussion the only recourse left was that of fighting the matter out. In his report for 1890 President Fitzpatrick condemned the "lukewarm action" of previous years and urged that "decided action" be taken toward the rival body.¹⁷ Acting upon his advice,

¹⁴ In organization and policies the Brotherhood was patterned largely after the union.

¹⁵ Proceedings, 1886, p. 32.

¹⁶ Iron Molders' Journal, June, 1888, p. 4.

¹⁷ Proceedings, 1890, p. 10.

the 1890 convention passed resolutions refusing recognition to any other union of iron molders and emphasizing the desirability of "one card and one union."¹⁸ An open fight then began. In several cities loyal local unions voted to expel all members who joined the "red-card" brotherhood. At other places where strikes had been called by the Brotherhood, the strikers were replaced by members of the union. In spite of its boasted strength the Brotherhood was unable to meet the assault upon it otherwise than by "calling names." Finally, in November, 1892, the Brotherhood "sued for peace." A conference between the contending factions was held at Indianapolis on April 11, 1893. It was agreed to submit the question of one union or separate unions to the machinery molders in both organizations. In the union the one-organization program was carried by the overwhelming vote of 7,628 to 208. The vote in the Brotherhood was not made public, but a majority favored consolidation. The supremacy of the union thereafter remained unquestioned except by a few irreconcilables who still tried to keep up the Brotherhood.¹⁹ Within a short time this guerilla warfare also ceased.

(3) *Jurisdiction over Brass Molding.* Although the Molders extended their jurisdiction over the "brass branch" in 1867, for many years they made no special effort to organize it, since their interest was centered in the iron trade. During the eighties the Knights of Labor attracted many brass molders to their ranks. In 1888 the Knights authorized the formation of National Trades' Assembly No. 252 to include molders and all other branches connected with the brass industry. In 1890 a secession movement within the Trades' Assembly resulted in the formation of the International Brotherhood of Brass Workers. Five years later the Trades' Assembly and the Brass Workers combined

¹⁸ Iron Molders' Journal, August, 1890, p. 2.

¹⁹ Proceedings, 1895, pp. 16-18. In January, 1894, the Brotherhood still reported forty-nine local unions. Most of these existed only on paper.

under the title of the United Brotherhood of Brass and Composition Metal Workers, Polishers and Buffers. Finally, in 1896, this body consolidated with another organization known as the Metal Polishers, Buffers and Platers' International Union of North America in forming the Metal Polishers, Buffers, Platers and Brass Workers' Union of North America, which affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.²⁰

As the various unions mentioned above were established from time to time, the Molders began to give greater attention to the brass branch. Members were aroused over the possibility of losing an important branch of the trade and efforts were made to organize the larger brass foundries. Soon after their formation in 1896 the Metal Polishers also began a campaign for the organization of all kinds of brass workers. Low dues enabled them to make considerable headway in the brass foundry. Occasionally a journeyman who had been suspended from the Molders was admitted and at once complaint would be made that the Polishers were affording a haven for scabs. Before long the Polishers began to act upon the assumption that they possessed sole jurisdiction over the brass foundry. In order to indicate that this assumption was a false one the Molders adopted a brief but significant resolution in 1902 asserting their "right over brass molding." They also voted to notify the American Federation of Labor, as the arbiter of jurisdictional disputes, that a definite and positive stand had been taken. While the Molders insisted upon their exclusive right to organize brass molders, they were willing to cede to the Polishers those establishments where brass molders formed but a small fraction of the metal workers. An exchange of brass molders' cards was also authorized.²¹

The Molders' action at once caused the Metal Polishers to bring the dispute to the attention of the American Federation in the following December. The Federation advised

²⁰ The Journal (Metal Polishers), September, 1911, pp. 33-40.

²¹ Proceedings, 1902, pp. 664, 675, 676, 725.

a settlement "outside of the convention."²² Accordingly, a conference was held in June, 1903, but no progress could be made. In December the Polishers appealed again to the Federation which then reached a definite decision in favor of the Molders. The defeated party, however, made no move to carry out the Federation's edict. Further conferences between the disputants followed. At these meetings, as at the hearings before the Federation, the Molders contended that they were the older body, that they had always claimed jurisdiction over brass molding, as well as all other forms of the trade such as grey iron, malleable, steel, and mixed-metal molding, and that they were actually a "metal molders' union." No agreement was reached, however, although the Molders readily conceded the smaller brass foundries to the opposing side.²³

In 1909, after two further conferences with the Polishers had failed to accomplish anything, the Molders' local unions were instructed to use every effort to organize the brass molders. In the same year the American Federation of Labor reaffirmed its decision of 1903. Discovering that their charter from the Federation was likely to be withdrawn in case they did not adhere to the decision, the Polishers' officers agreed to surrender, provided the settlement was endorsed by their membership. In January, 1911, the Polishers held a referendum which produced a majority of 1,195 in favor of obeying the Federation. On March 1, 1911, 408 brass molders were transferred by the Polishers to the Molders and the jurisdictional dispute was at an end.

(4) *Jurisdiction over Coremaking.* In the early days the molder made his own cores. As the molding industry developed, the specialized coremaker came into existence. In many of the smaller shops, however, the molder was still compelled to be his own coremaker. Throughout the

²² Proceedings (Metal Polishers), 1903, p. 18.

²³ Iron Molders' Journal, November, 1905, p. 851; Proceedings, 1907, p. 32; 1912, p. 4.

trade generally, indeed, a knowledge of cores continued to be very valuable to molders, so much so that boys learning to mold were generally given several months on the core-bench. Coremakers as such were not admissible to membership in the early molders' unions. Neither were they eligible for admission under the rules of the International Union at first. As time went on it was discovered that scab molders were drifting to the core-bench and that the bargaining power of the machinery and jobbing molders, especially, was weakened by non-union conditions in the core-rooms. Accordingly, union molders began to point out the necessity of admitting coremakers to membership.

By 1888 coremakers had begun to organize independently. To this movement the Molders gave considerable support at first. The main consideration of the times was to get the coremakers unionized in order to make the core-room an auxiliary to the foundry floor in carrying out union principles. The convention of 1890 authorized local unions wherever possible to assist in the organization of coremakers. A few local unions came out on sympathetic strikes in behalf of the coremakers, but, generally speaking, the Molders tended strictly to their own disputes.

In 1896 the Core Makers' International Union was formed and granted a charter in the American Federation of Labor. By this time the Molders' enthusiasm for separate organization had begun to abate since it had been found that when members went on a strike, their places were frequently taken by coremakers who knew something about molding. The offenders justified their course on the ground that molders had seldom come to the coremakers' aid in time of difficulty. Many molders now began to favor amalgamation as a solution for the lack of cooperation between the two unions. It was pointed out that separate organization prevented molders from going on the core-bench whenever a larger number of coremakers was needed than could be supplied by the coremakers' union. Other molders op-

posed amalgamation as a step towards "the level of a miscellaneous branch of the Knights of Labor" and expressed the fear that it would lead the coremakers to depend upon the molders to fight their battles.²⁴

Lack of harmony between the two unions soon led to a state of affairs where a serious breach was threatened. The Core Makers felt that if the Molders would only adopt a more liberal attitude toward sympathetic strikes the chief difficulty would be solved. In April, 1897, they asked the Molders' executive board what attitude it would assume in case coremakers became involved in difficulty with a foundry management. The board, in a conservative reply, expressed itself strongly "against rushing headlong into a sympathetic strike" and declared that in all cases union molders must comply with the strike laws of their organization before quitting work in support of any other body of unionists. Several months after the board had stated its attitude toward sympathetic action, trouble occurred in Denver, where molders had been officially authorized to make the cores for a shop which had been struck by the coremakers. In defending the action of his members President Fox declared fair warning had been given that coremakers would not be assisted in disputes into which they might enter with little restraint and that molders, who had never surrendered their right to make cores, could not be expected to drop their tools every time two or three coremakers went on strike. The explanation, however, failed to convince the complaining party that it had received proper treatment.

At the Molders' convention of 1899 the coremaker question was thoroughly discussed. The convention voted to recognize the Core Makers as a separate organization, although the molders' right to make cores, when asked to do so by the foreman, was firmly upheld, except when coremakers were upon a "legitimate" strike. Molders who worked regularly at coremaking were instructed to affiliate

²⁴ Iron Molders' Journal, July, 1896, p. 289; August, p. 320.

with the proper union. In November, 1899, and again in December, 1901, conferences were held between the contending parties to see if it were possible to reach common ground. On each occasion the Core Makers endeavored to secure exclusive control over their "trade" and to pledge the molders to a policy of sympathetic strikes. The latter, however, tenaciously insisted upon the right of molders and apprentices to make cores when instructed to do so by foremen, and refused to alter their strike regulations. After the first conference the molders took a referendum vote on the question of affiliating all competent coremakers, but the members still preferred a middle-of-the-road policy and defeated the resolution. Disputes between the two organizations continued to arise. In several instances coremakers went on strike when foremen directed molders to assist in making cores.

In 1902 President Fox recommended complete control of coremaking by the Molders as a solution of the jurisdiction problem. Favorable action was taken upon the recommendation. It was voted, first, to invite all competent members of the Core Makers' Union to join the Molders' Union. Secondly, the officers of the Core Makers were asked to take up the amalgamation issue with their members. Thirdly, the Molders' incoming officers were authorized to decide whether an alliance with the Core Makers, involving sympathetic strikes, should be formulated. The Core Makers were also invited through a conference to consider amalgamation. Meanwhile coremakers were to be admitted to membership on a special "coremakers' card." The final action of the convention consisted in revising the constitution to read: "This Union shall have jurisdiction over the trade of molding in all its branches and subdivisions, including coremaking."²⁵ At their next convention, later in 1902, the Core Makers, more or less weary of strife, decided to submit the amalgamation issue to their member-

²⁵ Proceedings, 1902, pp. 618, 738, 747, 766.

ship for a referendum vote. Before this action was taken assurance was had from the Molders' officers that consolidation would not mean elimination. When the referendum was taken a majority of 120 out of 3,366 votes cast was found to favor consolidation. Accordingly, on May 2, 1903, the Core Makers' International Union formally turned over its 5,671 members and went out of existence. According to the view of some, the amalgamation of core-makers and molders would appear to be a step in the direction of industrialism. The groups affected, however, look upon coremaking as but one of the processes in molding, that is, the preparation of the inside of the mold.

CHAPTER V

MEMBERSHIP

Apprenticeship and Competency.—The Molders have always considered apprenticeship and competency as joint prerequisites for membership. Competency, indeed, has been supposed to arise in no small measure from the observance of the apprenticeship system. Consequently, a boy who has been reared in the trade as an apprentice under the guidance of qualified journeymen has always been more acceptable as a member than any other person. Furthermore, preference has always been expressed for apprentices who have learned to mold in union shops since the training received in such places has been under the direct supervision of the organization.

The early Philadelphia union limited its membership to "practical journeymen molders," and the Troy union imposed a fine upon members proposing the names of persons who had not served bona fide apprenticeships.¹ The International Union provided at its first convention that "any molder, after serving an apprenticeship of four years at his trade and competent to command the general average of wages, may be admitted to membership in any local union."² The helper system, together with the more or less irregular apprenticeship practices of unorganized shops, in time created a group of mechanics who had not served a regular apprenticeship but who were often as competent as if they had done so. Had the union continued to bar such persons, it would have created a permanent body of non-unionists. Accordingly, in 1878 admission was made possible for

¹ Journeymen Stove and Hollow-ware Moulders' Union of Philadelphia, Constitution and By-Laws, 1855, art. 1, sec. 1; art. 2, sec. 5; Troy local union, Minutes, MS., June 18, 1863.

² Constitution, 1859, art. 8.

molders who had worked at the trade for four years and were able to prove their competency. In 1902 it was decided that the prerequisite apprenticeship of four years at the trade might take place in any of the branches or subdivisions of the trade, including coremaking.

Competency was first described as ability to command the general average of wages. With the extension of jurisdiction over the molding of stoves, machinery, hollowware, brass, steel, aluminum, and mixed metals, and over coremaking, it proved impracticable to proceed on the basis of the general average wages because different wage scales prevailed in the various branches. Accordingly, in 1902, a molder was declared to be competent if able "to command the general average of wages paid in the branch or subdivision with which he is identified."³ The fact of competency is something to be decided by the foundryman. If a man can satisfy his employer as to his ability to earn the minimum rate, then he is competent enough to be admitted to membership. If a member's discharge is a case of "victimization," the organization endeavors to secure his reemployment, but where discharge is plainly due to incompetency, the member must suffer for his lack of skill.

One problem in the trade has been the "handy man," an individual described as a "molder, yet not a molder—a man of no skill, yet skilled in making simple work—an enigma."⁴ The admission of this type of workman has been steadily resisted by the rank and file of the union although here and there members have suggested a more liberal policy. Strikes against the use of "handy men" as molders have been frequent.

With the advent of the molding machine many employers hired operators who were not practical molders. After a certain period of opposition to the use of machinery for molding purposes the union finally decided to get control of the new devices. When it was discovered that most em-

³ Ibid., 1902, art. 8, sec. 1.

⁴ Iron Molders' Journal, January, 1900, p. 22.

ployers opposed the use of skilled molders upon machines, the union decided in 1907 to admit "any molder competent to operate any machine, squeezer, or other mechanical device used for the purpose of molding castings in sand" without his having served a regular apprenticeship. Persons admitted as machine operators were to "be so designated on their card and due-book" and were not to be permitted to work on the bench or floor without first having served the regular apprenticeship.⁵

Admission of Negroes.—Negroes were first employed in foundries as laborers. In the course of time they proved able to pick up parts of the molding trade, chiefly in stove, sash-weight and pipe shops. White molders, who disliked the competition of the colored "handy man" and association with him, endeavored to stop his progress in the trade by ridiculing his clumsy efforts and his inferior results. Finally, however, the negro's willingness to accept extremely low wages began to cause alarm. Notwithstanding this danger to their wage scales, the local unions in the South for racial reasons entirely excluded negroes from membership through the unwillingness of their members to propose a negro's name. Meanwhile the negro extended his field of operations and improved his skill.

By 1896 the competition of negro molders had become so acute that the executive board, moved in part by complaints from employers of white labor, condemned the "racial prejudices of a past generation" and strongly urged that efforts be made to organize the negroes of the South and thus counteract their "debasing influence" upon the trade.⁶ To carry out this plan proved a difficult problem because the negro had not forgotten "the bitter antagonism with which his original aspirations were confronted" and because he feared that preference would be granted the white molder if he demanded equal pay for equal work.⁷ The situ-

⁵ Constitution, 1907, art. 8, sec. 6.

⁶ Iron Molders' Journal, July, 1896, p. 279.

⁷ Ibid., July, 1898, p. 328.

ation was further complicated when several local unions, both in the "border states" and in the "Far South," flatly refused to admit negro molders.

In 1900 the international officers definitely took charge of the situation. At their solicitation local union No. 53, of Chattanooga, where the negro molder predominated, agreed to make an effort to organize colored journeymen. A few of the latter took out cards, but they quickly dropped their membership when their employers threatened to make affiliation with unions a cause for discharge. Since it proved difficult to get Chattanooga negroes into a regular local union, a "protectorate" was established over the district through an independent colored local union which paid no dues to the International and which, in fact, was under no obligations of any sort to that body. The latter, however, promised financial assistance to the negro union and stipulated that no white molder would be allowed to take the place of a colored journeyman on strike. The new plan did not work satisfactorily since the negroes seemed to feel that with their inferior skill they were better off out of labor organizations than in them.⁸

For several years the situation remained unchanged, except that the number of negro molders increased. The international officers steadily carried on a campaign of education designed to show the necessity of recognizing the negro. Members contended that the admission of negroes would induce more of them to enter the trade, but the officers pointed out that the union had to deal with a condition, not a theory, since there were already seven or eight hundred negroes employed at molding. The members were asked whether they desired to make the negro an ally or a permanent non-unionist, whose employment would prevent the organization from obtaining control of many important shops. In 1911 the view of the International finally gained

⁸ The case mentioned here is the only instance where the Molders have ever formed a local union independent of the central body.

recognition. In that year the Birmingham local union, the largest in the South, not only decided to admit all negro molders and coremakers in its jurisdiction but it also made vigorous efforts to carry out its policy. Since 1911 other local unions have also let down the bars. The actual organization of negroes, however, has proceeded slowly. Race prejudice has by no means been overcome, and the employers of negroes have discovered that it is easy to keep their men out of unions by discharging the first two or three who obtain membership.

Exclusion of Women.—The Molders' Union has "steadfastly frowned upon the employment of women in or about the foundry." It has contended that heavy, dangerous, grimy and dusty work is physically injurious to women and incompatible with their "finer nature," and that the lower labor standards generally acceptable to women constitute a menace to the standards obtained by men. In spite of the union's opposition, women have entered the trade, especially through the core-room. As early as 1884 women coremakers and foundry employees were working in Detroit. At first the experiment with women coremakers was not a success, but before long many foundrymen favored female help because it was believed that trained women could make better cores than men where a nice and careful adjustment was required and because women did not take to unionism.

No particular attention was given by the Molders to the "woman question" till after amalgamation with the Core Makers' in 1903. The number of women in the foundries was comparatively small prior to that time.⁹ Gradually, however, the number of women coremakers increased as large industry found it profitable to utilize them. Instead of being a mere industrial curiosity, the female foundry employee now became an industrial problem. At the 1907 convention the seriousness of the situation was fully recognized. Thus far no provision covering female labor had

⁹ In 1897 only forty-six women were reported as working at molding, including coremaking.

been incorporated into the rules of the union although the employment of both women and children had always been discouraged. It was now decided to bend every effort to eliminate female labor from the foundry, and to this end it was voted to fine any member, honorary or active, who gave instruction to "female help in the foundry at any branch of the trade."¹⁰ This fine was not to exceed fifty dollars, and for a second offense the offending member was to be expelled. During the next few years several strikes were called against the employment of women coremakers.

In spite of these rules, women coremakers continued to increase in non-union foundries. In the malleable iron trade it was reported in 1912 that 1,039 women were engaged at work in ninety shops. In order to reach establishments where labor organization would prove very difficult, the Molders endeavored to secure restrictive legislation. In 1910 a bill to prohibit the employment of woman coremakers was introduced in the New York legislature but it failed to pass. At the next session of the legislature the bill was reintroduced and the International sent a lobbyist to work for its passage. In 1912 the preliminary report of the Factory Investigating Commission of the State of New York appeared, in which it was recommended that female labor in foundries be prohibited. Largely as a result of the Commission's report, the legislature in 1913 passed a bill which prohibited the employment of women in core-rooms containing core ovens, and authorized the State Industrial Board to adopt regulations covering the size and weight of cores which might be made by women. In formulating its rules the Board ordered that women should not be allowed to handle cores having a temperature of over 110 degrees Fahrenheit, or to work at tasks where the combined weight of the core, corebox, and plate exceeded twenty-five pounds.¹¹ Soon after the enactment of the New

¹⁰ Proceedings, 1907, pp. 93, 116, 157, 169, 180.

¹¹ J. O. O'Leary, "New York State Foundry Rules Recently Adopted," in *International Molders' Journal*, July, 1915, p. 501.

York legislation, Ohio and Pennsylvania passed bills making fifteen pounds the maximum combined weight of core-box, core, and plate which women were permitted to handle. The passage of restrictive legislation in all three States soon had "a marked effect on some of the trust foundries," where, according to reliable witnesses, women had worked on cores "the combined weight of which would be over 150 pounds, requiring three or four women to roll them over."¹² In Massachusetts and New Jersey "female core-makers' bills" were introduced, but failed of adoption.

At both the 1912 and 1917 conventions resolutions were offered to admit women coremakers on the ground that they were "here to stay." The delegates, however, refused to alter the policy of the union. In 1912 women coremakers in Boston went on strike. Local union No. 106 of that city asked the executive board to give the strike financial support, but the board refused to lend its recognition or encouragement to the movement.¹³

Honorary Membership.—The Molders have never allowed members to resign from the union. To permit the severing of membership by resignation would enable persons who violate union rules to avoid union discipline. Non-active or honorary membership, however, has been recognized at all times. The Troy union on June 9, 1859, voted that members no longer employed at the trade should be given the privilege of becoming honorary members, exempt from all dues and assessments. When the International Union was founded, it allowed active members who desired to quit the trade to be placed upon an "honorary list." Upon their return to the foundry floor such persons became entitled to "clear" cards for which dues were to be paid from the date of deposit in a local union. In 1872 the "honorary card" was adopted in place of the "list" be-

¹² Letter to the writer from Editor John P. Frey.

¹³ International Molders' Journal, January, 1913, p. 30. The census for 1910 gave the number of women employed in all foundries as 1,298.

cause it afforded better proof of a member's status. In 1876 it was provided, further, that "any practical molder not following the business and in good bodily health and qualified by the articles of this constitution" might become an honorary member upon "taking the obligation, signing the constitution, and paying the initiation fee."¹⁴ After 1886 this scheme was abandoned since there was no particular advantage in attaching to the union persons who were non-active from the date of their affiliation. In 1899 a third class of honorary members was created when the convention endorsed an official decision that members receiving disability benefits should be granted retiring cards and should not receive further benefits.¹⁵

Not until 1868 did the rules say anything about the status of members who became foremen and employers. It was then provided that honorary membership might be granted to foremen who were clear on the local union books, excepting foremen of cooperative shops, whose crews, from top to bottom, were considered journeymen. Amendment was made to the rule in 1876 when honorary membership was forbidden to a foreman who worked on the floor and thus took the place of a journeyman. This regulation still obtains. In 1895 honorary membership for employers and foremen became compulsory instead of optional. Four years later it was voted that the new rule should not be construed as "applying to members of a cooperative foundry or those holding shares in a joint stock company, who work at the trade."¹⁶ In 1907 the union returned to its original policy and made honorary membership optional for employers and foremen on the ground that mere advance in rank was not to be "contrued as leaving the trade."¹⁷

The existing rules relating to honorary standing may be briefly summarized by stating that such standing must be

¹⁴ Constitution, 1876, art. 9, sec. 8.

¹⁵ Ibid., 1899, Decision No. 30.

¹⁶ Ibid., 1895, art. 11, sec. 2; Proceedings, 1899, p. 179.

¹⁷ Constitution, 1907, art. 11, sec. 2.

assumed only by members who have drawn disability benefits, and that as for others who cease work as journeymen, active membership may be maintained if it is desired. As a matter of course, most members entitled to honorary cards decide to draw them.

Expulsion and Suspension.—For many years suspension and expulsion went unregulated by the International Union. The lack of uniformity which prevailed had a demoralizing influence, since in some local unions it was very easy to expel a member while in others even a reprimand was difficult to obtain. Uniform procedure relative to expulsion was finally provided in 1873 when a decision by President Saffin was sustained by the convention. The decision held that before a member could be expelled he must be given an open trial before a committee of his local union, after charges had been submitted in writing, and that the vote to expel must be carried by a two thirds majority. The convention of 1876 provided the same procedure for suspension, fines, and reprimand as for expulsion and regulated the method of voting upon the various penalties. In 1895 it was ordered that where a verdict in favor of expulsion had been rendered, a synopsis of the charges, testimony and findings be submitted to the president of the International Union for approval, and that the defendant be given the right of appeal to the executive board as a final court. Although this rule made the local unions observe more care in cases of discipline, the number of members expelled and suspended annually continued to be large, as witnessed by the fact that there were 6,934 reinstatements in 1912 and 5,254 in 1914. In order to prevent local unions from placing prohibitive financial penalties upon expelled members, the convention of 1902 placed a limit of \$50.00 upon all fines.

Reinstatement and Amnesties.—The first general rule to be adopted relative to reinstatement was an approved presidential decision declaring that a suspended or expelled mem-

ber could be reinstated only by the "direct vote" of the union which imposed the penalty, "on payment of all indebtedness."¹⁸ This regulation was designed to prevent the regaining of good standing through local unions where the records of applicants were not known. In 1886 it was provided that a member suspended for non-payment of dues might be readmitted, after paying his indebtedness, by a majority vote of his union. In 1890 the same rule was applied to all suspended and expelled members. At present a member suspended for non-payment of dues is reinstated automatically on payment of his debts, but an expelled member, after paying all fines against him, must again be "obligated."

In times of stress the American trade union has frequently been very lenient with delinquent, suspended, or expelled members in order to prevent the creation of a large body of potential or active non-unionists. During such times it has been the policy to proclaim "amnesties" and to extend forgiveness for past delinquencies usually upon payment of a sum of money much smaller than is ordinarily required for reinstatement. The Molders have granted amnesties of two types, local and general, both of which have been under the control of the International Union.

In his report to the convention of 1867 President Sylvis declared that a "general pardon to delinquents could be adopted with great advantage to the organization." In the early years of the union many molders thought it "an experiment not likely to succeed, while others doubted the correctness of the principle upon which it was founded and others kept aloof from it for want of moral courage to meet the opposition of employers." With the progress of the organization, continued the report, "many of these men, through conviction or force on the part of the union, became members and have since become delinquents, and are now either suspended or expelled; and many of them express

¹⁸ International Journal, February, 1873. p. 10.

a sincere desire to be reinstated, while they remain out from fear of the fines and penalties that might be imposed were they to apply for admission." Many molders who had been expelled, not for scabbing but for non-payment of dues and taxes, were "kept away by the size of the bills against them." Sylvis estimated that at the time there were in the union's jurisdiction more than 2,500 non-members who comprised "the reservoir from which the employers expect to draw their aid in cases of difficulty."¹⁹ The convention accepted the president's advice and authorized him to offer a general amnesty to all suspended and expelled members upon their paying one half of the amount due their respective unions on or before August 1, 1867. Molders twice expelled were excluded from these provisions. One year later Sylvis reported that the amnesty, which had been extended on February 2, 1867, had resulted in bringing a large number of men back into the union. Since there continued to be need for leniency in some foundry centers, the 1868 convention decided to allow each subordinate union to offer local amnesties on such terms as they saw fit, provided that no member be excused from paying delinquent taxes due the International Union. The same policy was continued in 1870. In the next two years several unions voted to readmit members in arrears upon payments running from five to fifteen dollars. The success of the movement varied in different places. Considerable dissatisfaction resulted from the lack of uniformity in the terms offered by the various local unions. To remedy this situation the international president was authorized in 1872 to readmit all suspended members on payment of five dollars.

The panic of 1873 presented a problem in the hundreds of members who were suspended or expelled for non-payment of dues. It was soon felt that employers were taking advantage of the situation and that self-preservation required the union to make "a grand effort to unite every

¹⁹ Proceedings, 1867, p. 20.

molder in the country against the common enemy.”²⁰ In 1876, therefore, the president was empowered to reinstate suspended or expelled members upon payment of such amounts as he might fix. Since local unions were not prohibited from offering amnesties of their own, the president threw the burden of the program upon them. In many cases the local unions responded satisfactorily and the desired reorganization, as it was termed, was achieved. Sometimes, however, “it was hard to persuade a local union to remit a fine or reduce a bill of taxes” even though “such action was the cause of keeping out men . . . who had become suspended, etc., for want of means to pay taxes.” Consequently, President Saffin was again given power in 1878 to grant amnesties for reorganization purposes where local unions refused to do so. In October of that year Saffin gave notice that he would reinstate suspended members on payment of five dollars, provided applications were made within sixty days. The resistance of the refractory local unions then broke down, local amnesties were offered almost universally and an immediate increase in membership took place.²¹

The last half of the eighties also proved a difficult time for the Molders. Membership was at a low ebb and suspensions and expulsions took place with great frequency. In order to save the situation the convention of 1886 advised local unions to grant amnesties to suspended members for a term of six months and also urged that they “be as lenient as possible in the amount they shall pay for reinstatement.”²² A general amnesty, however, was held to be inadvisable at the time. Until the end of the panic of 1893, local amnesties were frequent. The panic years threw about two thirds of the membership out of employment. Conditions became so bad that at the 1895 convention a general amnesty, to last until January 1, 1896, was declared.

²⁰ Iron Molders' Journal, August, 1876, p. 68.

²¹ Ibid., October, 1878, p. 49.

²² Proceedings, 1886, p. 27.

All members in difficulty with the union, except those expelled for defrauding the organization, were ordered reinstated upon payment of three dollars, the equivalent of twelve weeks' dues.

Since 1895 no general amnesty has been granted. However, when the fight with the National Founders' Association began in 1904, the executive board recommended that machinery-molders' unions reinstate suspended members, except embezzlers, until July 31, 1905, for \$5.50. By this plan it was hoped to keep the Founders from capturing suspended members and persuading them by means of liberal wages to act as strike breakers. The Molders have had no occasion for amnesties during the past fifteen years for several reasons. In the first place strengthened beneficial features have made membership much more desirable than it once was. Again, out-of-work benefits for thirteen weeks, plus the right to an honorary card at the expiration of that period, now seem to make suspension entirely unnecessary so far as the payment of dues is concerned. Thirdly, whenever for any cause suspensions or expulsions have occurred, the union has been strong enough to compel delinquents to secure reinstatement by settlement in full.

CHAPTER VI

FINANCE

The International Union.—(a) *Revenue.* The first revenues of the union were raised in a very simple way. Each affiliated union was required to pay ten dollars annually and, in addition, was assessed a similar amount for each delegate allowed at the general convention. In 1860 a more equitable plan was established under which each local union was required to pay a per capita tax of five cents per month. As the union grew, more revenue was needed: Accordingly, the 1865 convention voted to levy a semi-annual tax of two dollars per member. In 1867 additional financial needs led to the imposition of a per capita of fifty cents per month. The next year this levy was reduced to twenty-five cents. In 1890 dues were increased to forty cents per month so that they might "cover all expenses." The receipts were to be apportioned to "funds" as follows: to the benefit fund, sixteen per cent; to the monthly or general fund, twenty-six per cent; to the strike fund, fifty-eight per cent. In case of emergency the executive board was empowered to draw on one fund for the advantage of another.

The International Union has always obtained extraordinary revenue by the imposition of assessments collected through the local unions. In 1863 the constitution provided that deficiencies might be met by a "pro rata assessment levied on the average wages of each subordinate union."¹ Since local unions proved dilatory in forwarding their assessments, the 1864 convention created a contingent fund for strike purposes by the levy of a five per cent tax on wages during the months of September and October of that year. By having money on hand the union felt that it would be in a

¹ Constitution, 1863, art. 6, sec. 1.

better position to conduct disputes with employers. Three years later this plan was abandoned as inadequate, and the president, with the consent of the majority of the corresponding representatives, was allowed to levy an assessment upon local members at any time, provided it did not exceed five per cent of the wages earned. By 1876 the maximum of five per cent on earnings was dropped. In sending out a strike circular the president of the general union was to "prepare a statement, to be appended thereto, of the exact amount of money that will be required weekly from each union to sustain the said strike."² In 1882 it was again deemed advisable to create a strike fund by the levy of one dollar for each member, to be collected as the local unions desired. The next convention, however, reverted to the old plan of irregular levies imposed by the executive board. A limit of one dollar per quarter was placed upon the assessments, but in 1888 it was removed as it was found that the receipts sometimes fell short of needs, thus making it necessary to borrow funds from the monthly income for payment of strike benefits. The constant change in policy during all these years was due to efforts to raise funds, whose amount could not be predetermined, with as little burden and annoyance as possible.

The increase in dues in 1890 proved very satisfactory. All payments to the International were consolidated under one head. Altogether it was one of the notable measures in the union's financial history, and it came at a time when the organization was stable enough to afford benefits commensurate with the higher payments required of members. After experience had shown the benefits of consolidated and increased dues, the Molders in 1895 inaugurated their "high-dues policy" by the imposition of a levy of twenty-five cents per week per capita, about double the previous average dues, local and international combined. Prior to this time local dues had been left to local deter-

² Ibid., 1876, art. 6, sec. 3.

mination, subject to the approval of the general president. The legislation of 1895, however, fixed the local as well as the international dues. Here again the interests of simplicity and convenience were served and "the trade union doctrine of equal benefits for equal dues" was effectively put into practice. The new dues, like those of 1890, were divided into several funds. Ten cents was to be forwarded to the international treasurer who was to apportion sixteen per cent of the sum to the death-and-disability-benefit fund, twenty-six per cent to the monthly fund, and fifty-eight per cent to the strike fund. Fifteen cents was left in the care of the local unions. Eight cents of this amount was to be held in trust for sick-benefit payments, and seven cents was to go into the local treasuries. Strengthened beneficial features and increasing emphasis upon militant unionism were the two causes for the high-dues policy.

The fight with the National Founders' Association and the needs of the conference boards after 1902 entailed such large expenditures that the executive board was compelled to resort to large and frequent special assessments. A demand for increased dues was at once created by the shortage of funds. Local unions everywhere were pushing grievances, strikes abounded, and the whole organization proved intent upon fighting vigorously against hostile groups of employers. Since special assessments were as unpopular as ever, the 1907 convention met the situation by making the dues forty cents per week. Death and disability benefits, strike benefits and administrative expenditure were awarded twenty-three cents; sick and out-of-work benefits, eight cents; local unions, nine cents. In March, 1917, by referendum vote dues were advanced to fifty cents per week in order to increase strike benefits to \$9 per week. Later, in 1917 dues were raised to sixty cents per week in order to give better support to movements for shorter hours and for wage increases. Thirty-six cents was given

to the headquarters' fund, eleven cents to the benefit fund, and thirteen cents to the local fund.³

It has well been said that the Molders' progress "can be measured in a large degree by the changes in their financial system. They were weak when their dues were low. . . . They set their feet upon a solid foundation only when they determined to pay sufficient dues" to pay strike benefits to every striker and to develop their beneficial features to a point where membership was made attractive.⁴ Their position as one of the leading "high-dues" unions enables them to enjoy first class leadership, effective organizing agencies, up-to-date business methods, and able legal defense.

The initiation fee charged by local unions varied from fifty cents to \$6 in different unions until 1867, when it was made \$5 throughout the union. In 1878 the fee was reduced to \$3, but in 1895 it was reestablished at \$5, where it still remains. Two dollars out of the fee is forwarded to the international treasurer while the remainder goes to the local funds.

Minor sources of income are found in a charter fee of \$5 exacted from new local unions, and receipts from fines, the sale of supplies, subscriptions, and advertisements placed in the official journal. Union cards were once sold to local unions, but they are now supplied gratuitously.

The receipts of the International Union from 1860 to 1917 are shown in the following table:⁵

³ It should be noted that in 1907 the union gave up the policy of dividing the receipts at headquarters into three funds—death and disability, strike, and monthly—and simply lumped everything into one account, thereby saving a considerable amount of book-keeping. The separate funds in reality meant very little as the trustees were constantly transferring money from one to the other.

⁴ International Molders' Journal, April, 1915, p. 281.

⁵ For the figures from 1860 to 1902 in this table and in others following, the writer is partly indebted to Sakolski, "The Finances of the Iron Molders' Union," in Hollander and Barnett, *Studies in American Trade Unionism*, pp. 83-107.

Years	Receipts	Average per Year
1860	\$ 6,125.06	\$ 6,125.06
1861	1,605.14	1,605.14
1862
1863	17,668.35	17,668.35
1864	5,257.97	5,257.97
1865	14,659.44	14,659.44
1866	44,646.71	44,646.71
1866-68.....	48,977.75	24,888.88
1868-70.....	28,780.49	14,390.24
1870-72.....	48,254.94	24,127.47
1872-74.....	41,967.78	20,983.89
1874-76.....	48,279.13	24,139.56
1876-78.....	37,801.17	18,900.58
1878-82.....	79,625.00	26,542.00
1882-84.....	83,206.19	41,603.09
1884-86.....	82,842.42	41,421.21
1886-88.....	102,395.69	51,197.84
1888-90.....	142,753.77	71,376.88
1890-95.....	370,280.84	74,058.16
1895-99.....	525,709.72	131,427.48
1899-02.....	902,573.92	300,857.97
1902-07.....	1,477,024.96	295,404.99
1907-12.....	2,522,350.89	504,470.18
1912-17.....	2,974,292.77	594,858.55

(b) *Expenditures.* Strike disbursements in the Molders' Union for twenty years have been "larger than those of any similar organization, and have at times amounted to more than three fourths of its total revenue."⁶ In this way the union in 1913, for example, spent on strikes a sum exceeded by only one other union, the United Mine Workers.⁷ In the early years of the union strike expenditure exhibited considerable variation in volume. Frequently the stronger local unions went out on unauthorized strikes and in that way cut themselves off from strike pay. Since about 1882 the stoppage of independent strikes and the growth in territorial jurisdiction and membership have caused a continually increasing strike expenditure by the International Union. In certain years, however, extra large sums have been expended in fighting hostile employers' associations. For example, in 1900 a strike against the Cleveland branch of the National

⁶ Sakolski, p. 87. For a discussion of expenditure for beneficial features, see chap. vii.

⁷ The Molders paid out \$459,722.48; the Miners, \$1,200,796.93.

Founders' Association, which lasted eleven months, involved strike payments amounting to \$104,630. During the years 1902-1907, when conflict with the Association became general, the union was forced to raise by assessment the sum of \$408,148.95 to supplement its regular defense funds. Recent movements for increased wages, shorter hours, and recognition of the union have been responsible for most of the large amounts spent for militant purposes. As far as possible the Molders now endeavor to be an offensive, rather than a defensive, body. Since 1891, when the agreement with the Stove Founders' National Defense Association went into effect, all strike expenditure in the stove branch has been confined to disputes with shops independent of the Association.

The following table shows what has been spent for strikes out of the general treasury. Local expenditures have never been reported in full.

Years	Cost	Yearly Average
1860	\$ 5,111.60	\$ 5,111.60
1861	1,115.00	1,115.00
1862
1863	10,329.89	10,329.89
1864	17,260.00	17,260.00
1865	6,000.00 *	6,000.00 *
1866	25,000.00 *	25,000.00 *
1866-68	9,500.00	4,750.00
1868-70	5,350.00	2,675.00
1870-72	32,209.78	16,104.89
1872-74	20,788.82	10,394.41
1874-76	16,117.46	8,058.73
1876-78	15,568.65	7,784.32
1878-82	19,894.63	4,973.65
1882-86	56,343.53	14,085.88
1886-88	33,883.54	16,941.77
1888-90	67,964.32	33,982.16
1890-95	209,967.52	41,994.38
1895-99	175,704.49	43,926.12
1899-02	334,113.68	111,371.22
1902-07	1,477,173.46	295,434.69
1907-12	1,176,548.11	233,309.62
1912-17	1,723,287.51	344,657.50

The most important item in the group of administrative

* Approximate.

expenditures has been the cost of organizing. It includes the salaries and expenses of the officials engaged in organizing locals and in settling trade disputes. "In the early days the revenues of the . . . union were too much limited to permit extended activities of this kind. Whatever was accomplished was done either voluntarily by local leaders or by the president of the National Union largely at his own expense."⁸ For example, in 1863 President Sylvis was compelled to finance his famous organizing trip by soliciting donations from local unions as he went along. In 1864 the convention made Sylvis a grant of \$350 in payment of his services during the preceding year and also voted the president a future salary of \$600 with travelling expenses. By gradual stages the president's salary has been increased to the present amount of \$3,750. Vice-presidents received only the pay due them as members of the executive board down to 1888, when the one vice-president then provided for was made assistant organizer and granted a salary of \$1,000 per annum with travelling expenses. The first vice-president now receives \$2,750 and his six associates receive \$2,400 per year, with expenses. Owing to their extensive and frequent trips the expenses of the vice-presidents have constituted a notable item since the early nineties. Special organizers have had their compensation fixed from time to time by the executive board.

The Molders consider that the costs of organizing are reproductive expenditures. Sakolski says:

It is estimated that the increase in membership resulting from organizing efforts not only adds to the efficiency of collective bargaining on the part of the Union, but actually strengthens its financial resources in that the dues paid by the new members soon exceed the expense entailed in organizing them. Moreover, the services of the organizers in settling trade disputes and in arranging conferences with employers prevent wasteful expenditure for strikes.⁹

The following table shows the cost of maintaining the organizing staff since 1899:

⁸ Sakolski, p. 96.

⁹ Ibid., p. 97.

	1899-1902	1902-1907	1907-1912	1912-1917
President.....	\$ 6,000.00	\$18,275.00	\$22,500.00	\$ 23,800.00
Vice-Presidents	32,473.65	66,775.00	74,700.00	135,580.52
Special organizers...	10,039.79	39,605.10	60,392.68	42,871.82
Miscellaneous organizing expenses.....		9,364.31	18,463.06	10,845.77

The cost of office management has never been heavy as compared with the volume of business transacted. The salaries of the officials and clerks have been comparatively small. The first officer after the president to be granted a salary was the treasurer who, in 1866, was awarded \$300 per year, with travelling expenses. His present pay is \$2,230.40. The secretary and his assistant were paid \$6 per day during conventions, beginning with 1867. At present they receive \$2,500 and \$2,230.40 per year, respectively. The office of financier, when created in 1895, carried with it \$1,000 per year. Now it yields \$2,500. The assistant financier is paid \$2,230.40. In 1895 the editor of the official journal was given but \$75 per month. The present salary is \$2,500 per year. These officers are all entitled to convention mileage and a fixed daily amount for expenses. The executive board members, who were granted mileage and \$3 per day in 1878, now obtain \$25 per quarter and \$6 per day while engaged upon their duties, plus mileage and hotel expenses. The expenditure for the executive board has been steadily growing with the greater frequency and length of board meetings. The average annual cost for the term 1912-1917 was \$3,719.35.

The largest items included under office expenditures are those of printing, stationery, and postage. During the term 1907-1912 these items required the expenditure of over \$90,000 out of the \$153,986.06 devoted to office use. An enormous amount of printing and correspondence is involved. In this connection, Sakolski states:

Besides the quarterly reports, circular returns, remittance blanks, voting papers, and numerous other printed papers, circulars, and reports, all of which must be sent to the officers of every local and by them submitted to the members, there is the printing and

distribution of constitutions, executive board conferences and convention proceedings, entailing a correspondingly heavy expenditure for postage and expressage.¹⁰

The cost of printing and publishing the official journal is at present only partly met by the general union. Since 1894 members subscribing to that publication have been required to pay a nominal price of twenty-five cents per year. The net cost of the journal since 1896 has ranged from \$2,000 to \$10,000 per annum. Subscriptions and advertisements now return about fifty per cent of the expense of the publication.

From the outset the general organization has paid mileage and a per diem to all convention delegates. On several occasions the heavy expense for conventions "has brought the organization to the verge of bankruptcy." The interval between conventions was increased in 1866, in 1878, and again in 1890, largely for purpose of economy. Part of the expense of conventions has been due to the protracted sessions. Efforts have been made to reduce their length, but with little success. As the union has increased in size the representation of local unions has also been decreased in the endeavor to cut expenses.

The following table shows the expenses of each general convention since 1874:

Date	Number of Delegates	Days in Session	Cost in Mileage and per Diem
1874	87	9	\$ 5,609.03
1876	78	9	3,844.60
1878	54	9	2,926.35
1879	28	4	797.20
1882	153	11	11,479.08
1886	249	11	10,539.18
1888	271	10	13,664.27
1890	108	10	17,143.36
1895	312	13	14,005.00
1899	311	14	24,019.68
1902	385	20	50,670.72
1907	468	19	45,563.79
1912	397	19	47,553.73
1917	415	19	55,725.09

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 98.

Per capita taxes and assessments paid to the American Federation of Labor, the Metal Trades Department of the Federation, the Canadian Labor Congress, and the Union Label League, together with the expenses of delegates to the first three organizations, totaled \$38,628.29 for the term of 1912-1917. Conference meetings with the Stove Founders' National Defense Association for the same term required \$3,645.13 and conferences with local employers cost \$5,886.14. Conference boards of local unions have drawn rather heavily upon the general union within recent years.

Litigation has recently become an important item in expenditure. Prior to 1899 the organization spent but little money in this manner. "In fact, from 1890 to 1895, the single recorded item was fifty dollars for attorney's fees, and in the four years following the total expenditure was only \$187.36. More recently, however, the resort of employers to the use of the injunction against striking iron molders has led to larger expenditures."¹¹ The union at present does not always stand on the defense. In a number of recent instances it has brought suit for damages against foundry firms on the ground of conspiracy. The expenses for litigation since 1899 have been as follows: 1899-1902, \$5,147.86; 1902-1907, \$7,363.59; 1907-1912, \$15,788.32; 1912-1917, \$30,979.42. These amounts include what the International Union has spent directly and the sums advanced to local unions.

(c) *Financial Administration.* A large part of the Molders' success in securing financial stability may be attributed to their system of fiscal administration. In the early years of organization a "crude and defective procedure" was followed, but at the present time a "highly efficient system of financial control" obtains. The first administrative provisions were extremely simple. The president drew all orders upon the treasurer for the payment of moneys legally expended. Here his responsibilities ceased and the detailed care of finance was left to the treasurer. In 1886

¹¹ Ibid., p. 100.

the growth of the organization necessitated the employment of a salaried financial secretary whose duty it is to keep a regular book account of all transactions between the central office and the local unions and to publish at regular intervals full financial statements. Money received by the secretary from local unions is now transferred to the treasurer, excepting a small amount allowed for office expenses. The president countersigns all orders drawn by the secretary on the treasurer. According to Sakolski:

The inauguration of the sick benefit in 1895 led to the appointment of an additional fiscal officer, known as the financier, charged with the special duties of keeping record of the standing of individual members, the amount of tax paid by each local union, and the condition of the sick-benefit funds. He received from the local financial secretaries and correspondents regular monthly reports, giving the names of all members paying dues, the amount of sick benefits paid to each, and the condition of the local sick-benefit fund.¹²

The financier, as supervisor of the finances of the local unions, soon proved his value as a check upon abuse of the beneficiary system, because he had all the local-union figures before him and could easily detect and investigate abnormal benefit payments that savored of fraud.

Financial officers have been placed under bond with reputable bonding companies and have not been allowed to hold sums of money in excess of specified amounts. The treasurer is required to place the reserve funds in the custody of the trustees who are joint guardians of all accumulated balances. The trustees must deposit their funds in some accredited bank in their own names and in that of the international president in order to reduce the liability to misappropriation. The bonding of local-union officers was left entirely to the subordinate bodies until 1907, except that two of the special agents handling strike funds, the receiver and the paymaster, were made to give bonds in amount acceptable to the general president. Gradually it became customary for local unions to require sureties for other fiscal officers, and in 1907 the convention ordered all local cor-

¹² Ibid., p. 102.

responding secretaries, financial secretaries, and treasurers to be bonded for sums not less than \$250. Most of the business of bonding local officers was done by surety companies until 1907 when the International Union decided to bond such officers on its own account. To this end it organized a Fidelity Department under the administration of the financier. Rates for bonding were fixed according to the size of the bonds and the membership of the local unions. Bonds were to be issued only when local unions complied strictly with the constitutional provisions relating to the audit of their accounts. If any union should refuse or neglect to comply with the rules in this respect after being notified by the financier, the bonds of the officers were to be cancelled. In this way the bonding system was made the capstone of the auditing system. All receipts from bonding were ordered placed in a separate fidelity fund, from which, in turn, all expenses of the Department were to be paid.¹³ For the term 1912-1917 the receipts of the Fidelity Department, including the balance carried forward and interest, were \$35,658.11 and its expenses were \$14,961.21, leaving a favorable balance of \$20,696.90. The Department has been successful in providing cheap bonding rates, in reducing red tape, and in eliminating cases of embezzlement.

The convention of 1859 ordered that the treasurer should make an annual report, which was to be submitted to an auditing committee by the convention receiving it. When the board of trustees was created in 1882 it was given power to require full details from the president and treasurer concerning their financial transactions, and it could order them to publish financial statements, individually or jointly, through the official journal. In 1879 the convention gave the board power to appoint an auditing committee from the union or unions in the vicinity of the executive office to examine and report on the president's books every six months and to look into the accounts of other financial of-

¹³ Constitution, 1912, art. 12.

ficers, if the board so desired. Since 1912 one auditor each has been selected by the four local unions nearest international headquarters to go over all financial accounts. An even more effective means than auditing for discovering discrepancies in the accounts of general officers has been the requirement that both the secretary and the treasurer issue simultaneously quarterly reports containing itemized statements of the accounts of the local unions with headquarters and further detailed financial information.

For many years the local unions were very careless about remitting per capita taxes and assessments to the International. "Besides the acknowledged arrearages there was considerable outright evasion of the per capita tax by the local unions, the president reporting in 1895 that 'from careful calculation,' he 'had come to the conclusion that less than seventy-five per cent of the per capita tax reached the coffers of the national organization.'" ¹⁴ When a system of uniform dues and benefits was established in 1895, "sufficient control was acquired over the local funds to insure the financial solidarity of the organization. To minimize losses a plan of collecting union revenue, described as the 'stamp receipt system,' was instituted . . . and is now in force. According to this plan, each local union in return for the per capita tax remitted . . . , receives from the general secretary an equal amount in stamp receipts. These stamp receipts are affixed to the members' books upon the payment of dues, and no member is considered in good standing unless he can show, for the period covered, the requisite number of stamps properly dated and cancelled. Since no other form of receipt is recognized . . . , and remittances must accompany orders for stamps, the local unions have little opportunity to evade their share of the per capita tax or benefit assessments." ¹⁵

The corresponding secretary in each local union is "employed to secure efficient fiscal relations" between the

¹⁴ Sakolski, p. 105.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 105-106.

International and his union by acting as the fiscal agent of the former. He sends all local remittances to the general treasurer and acts as the receiver of all funds sent to the local unions for strikes or other purposes. Benefit has also been derived from the introduction of uniform methods of bookkeeping in the local branches. In 1907 each local union was required to elect a board of auditors whose findings were to be returned to the financier's office where they were to be checked up against figures in that officer's possession.

Conference Boards.—The chief revenue of the conference boards has been obtained from per capita taxes, varying in amount from five to twenty cents per month, levied upon the membership of affiliated local unions. Not long after the formation of the different boards their work increased to such a degree that this tax provided insufficient revenue. The services of the boards were so valuable that the International Union decided to grant them from \$6 to \$10 per week for stated brief periods. In 1899 a general allowance of two cents per member per month was granted all boards that were already doing as much for themselves as could be expected. In 1907 three cents was paid; in 1912, five cents. Since 1907 the International has also granted in special cases "such other sums" as have been "found necessary." Conference boards have always obtained most of their receipts from their own taxes. For example, during the term ending June 30, 1917, local unions paid to the boards \$210,289.93, or twice the amount obtained from the International. The expenditures of conference boards have consisted chiefly of the salaries and expenses of business agents, office rent, and stationery. The following table shows the amount of subsidies paid by the International Union to conference boards from 1895 to 1917:

Years	Amount	Yearly Average
1895-1899.....	\$ 833.15	\$ 208.29
1899-1902.....	5,100.28	1,700.09
1902-1907.....	35,435.10	7,087.02
1907-1912.....	69,716.58	13,943.32
1912-1917.....	101,157.97	21,031.59

Local Unions.—Since 1895 local unions have obtained the bulk of their revenue from their share of the regular per capita taxes. Minor receipts have been derived from fines and rather infrequent special assessments. Local expenditures were formerly largely for strikes and lockouts. At present local unions depend chiefly upon international support to finance trade difficulties, yet they may draw upon their own funds or solicit contributions from other local unions to supplement the general strike benefits. The greater part, however, of the revenues of the local unions is expended for officers' salaries, hall rent and printing.

CHAPTER VII

MUTUAL INSURANCE

Death and Disability Benefits for Active Members.—The early molders' unions in a few instances paid small death or funeral benefits. In some cases, as with the New York union formed in 1849, payment of the benefits was put forth as one of the chief objects of organization. The question of establishing some kind of a "benevolent fund in connection with the local unions" first came before the general convention in 1861. Owing to the fact that many subjects of more fundamental importance confronted the young organization at that time, the matter was laid upon the table. However, several unions proceeded to act upon their own initiative and instituted death benefit systems. In 1864 proposals were made for a "national benefit feature" but the convention felt that it would be unwise to enter upon the unknown seas of mutual insurance until the local unions had been given more time to experiment. At several conventions the question was reopened but it was not until 1870 that favorable action resulted. By this time it had become evident that there were important advantages in paying benefits through the general union instead of through local unions. In some cases membership in local beneficiary systems was compulsory. Travelling members complained that it was unfair to force them to pay beneficiary fees while they belonged to certain local unions and then to deny them any right to benefits when they moved to other jurisdictions. In order to eliminate dissatisfaction in this connection it was decided to experiment with a national benefit plan.

On October 1, 1870, the "Iron Molders' Beneficial Association of North America" was inaugurated with provisions for death and disability benefits for any union

member in good standing for a period of at least three months. Membership in the Association was made voluntary. A permanent fund was to be created by the payment of one dollar by each member and further money was to be secured by assessing members fifty cents on the death or permanent disablement of any member. Forty cents out of each assessment was to be set aside toward the payment of the benefit. All payments were to be made to the treasurer of the international union and the international president was made the chief administrative officer of the Association. As a result of this action the Molders achieved the distinction of being the second trade union in America to create a general system for paying death benefits, the first organization being the Cigar Makers in 1867. The scheme proved quite successful for some time. In a few cases local unions affiliated as a whole. Assessments were also "paid with a degree of regularity that permitted prompt remittance of benefits." Gradually, however, interest in the Association declined. Members complained at the amount of the assessments in spite of the fact that they were getting "the cheapest insurance in the world."¹ Fewer and fewer molders joined the Association as the years went on and many old members dropped out. "The yield of the assessment fell off, and in 1882 the whole plan was abolished. The highest membership attained by the Association was twelve hundred. Previous to 1874 the individual claims paid often amounted to five hundred dollars." After that date the sum paid on claims fell as low as one hundred and forty dollars and the expense of administration became as high as fifty per cent of the amount of the benefits paid.² The total benefits paid amounted to about \$18,000. The failure of the Beneficial Association was caused by the voluntary character of the organization, by the annoyance occasioned by irregular as-

¹ The assessments for six years and seven months following the introduction of the plan amounted to only \$27.50.

² Sakolski, pp. 90-91. During the early years of the Association the administrative expenses were under ten per cent.

sessments, and by the lack of employment growing out of the panic of 1873.

Even before the Association was abandoned in 1882, two other plans for the relief of distressed members were adopted. In 1874 it was decided to pay a graded superannuation benefit to members of twenty or more years good standing who should become disabled by accident or incapacitated by age after August 1, 1879. The purposes of this measure were to afford relief to the older members and to afford "an incentive to younger members to keep in the union." To secure the initial funds for the venture the president of the union was ordered to invest \$1,000 every six months in United States six per cent bonds until \$5,000 had been accumulated.³ Sentiment soon favored the abandonment of the proposed superannuation feature and the substitution of a funeral benefit. Accordingly, in 1878 it was ordered that the accumulated superannuation funds be turned over to the international treasurer for investment in a sinking fund out of which a benefit of \$100 was to be paid upon the death of any member who had been in good standing for at least one year. Every six months after January 1, 1879, the treasurer was to increase the fund by adding to it twenty-five per cent of the monthly taxes collected, or seven and one half cents per member.⁴ As soon as President Saffin was called upon to transfer the superannuation fund it came to light that he had appropriated the money for his own use. For this offense a special convention in 1879 removed him from office but the amount embezzled was never recovered.

With the superannuation fund irretrievably lost, the union was able to count only on the allotment from the monthly taxes as a means of securing revenues for the payment of benefits. Accordingly, no benefits were paid until January 1, 1880, when earlier claims also were met. In 1882 it was provided that a benefit of \$100 should also be

³ Proceedings, 1874, p. 76.

⁴ Ibid., 1878, p. 43.

paid to members suffering total disability, by which was meant total blindness, the loss of a leg, or an arm, or both. In order to take care of the increasing expenditures required under the larger benefit and by an increasing death rate, the apportionment for benevolent purposes was increased to thirty-five per cent of the monthly taxes, or eight and three quarters cents per month per member. At several following conventions the apportionment was raised or lowered, according to the deficits or surpluses exhibited by the fund at the end of each term. At the 1895 convention the benefit fund was awarded as subsidiary revenue two dollars from each initiation fee. A rapid increase in the number of new members caused an extraordinary yield from this source, and enabled the union to reward faithful members by increasing the benefits to those who had enjoyed continuous good standing for five years or more. Consequently, in 1899 it was adopted that graded benefits should be paid on the following scale:

Length of Membership	Benefit
1 to 5 years.....	\$100
5 to 10 years.....	150
10 to 15 years.....	175
15 years or more	200

Since 1907 when the union abolished the system of separate funds, the death and disability benefits have not had special receipts set aside for their payment, but have been paid from the amount allotted to the general office from members' monthly dues. Members who have received disability benefits are ineligible for death benefits and since 1895 they have been granted honorary cards. In 1890 paralysis was added to the afflictions held to constitute permanent disability. To be entitled to benefits members, at present, must not owe more than thirteen weeks' dues and taxes at the time of death or disability.

At the 1917 convention special provision was made for the payment of death and disability benefits to union members in the military and transport service of the United

States and Canada. Since the protection of these members was likely to constitute a heavy financial drain on the treasury, a general levy of one dollar per member was made for the purpose of creating a special benefit fund. Subsequent assessments for the same amount were also authorized. During their period of service such members were voted exemption from payment of dues and assessments. A retroactive character was given the measure by making it applicable to all members killed or disabled in the service since August, 1914.⁵

The following table shows the expenditure for death and disability benefits since 1880. The aggregate amount paid has been exceeded in only two other unions, the Carpenters and the Cigar Makers.⁶

Term	Death Benefits	Disability Benefits	Total
1880-1882	\$ 12,000.00		\$ 12,000.00
1882-1886	31,553.52	\$ 700.00	32,253.52
1886-1888	16,050.50	300.00	16,350.50
1888-1890	20,564.00	1,400.00	21,964.00
1890-1895	56,172.90	2,400.00	58,572.90
1895-1899	36,899.00	3,600.00	40,499.00
1899-1902	70,231.38	5,400.00	75,631.38
1902-1907	259,554.86	19,600.00	279,154.86
1907-1912	274,891.09	41,825.00	316,716.09
1912-1917	334,201.42	61,175.00	405,376.42
1880-1917	1,122,118.67	136,400.00	1,258,518.67

In 1910 and 1912 the union attempted to inaugurate an insurance system along lines similar to those prevailing in the railroad brotherhoods and in regular insurance companies. Efforts were made to secure applications for

⁵ Proceedings, 1917, pp. 214-215.

⁶ As soon as the international system of death benefits was well established, the local unions practically abandoned their own benefit features. In 1882 it was recommended that they resume the practice of paying some sort of benefits. Accordingly, several strong unions organized voluntary associations for paying death benefits financed by small fixed assessments levied on the occasion of the death of any member. Perhaps ten local unions have "endowment funds," as they are called, at the present time.

policies in the "Molders' Life Insurance Association" from members in Ohio where it was decided to launch the venture. Even though low premiums were established, it proved impossible to secure enough applications to perfect the organizations in conformity with the laws of the State of Ohio and it became necessary to give up the project.

Sick Benefits for Active Members.—Many early local unions paid some form of sick benefit or at least took up collections for sick members who were needy. Suggestions for a general sick-benefit feature began to appear about 1865 and by 1880 discussion of the question had become general, largely as a result of the fact that the establishment of sick funds by local unions had become quite common. While the local benefits proved of considerable service, complaints were made, as in the case of local death and disability benefits, that members of unions which levied beneficial assessments lost their rights to relief when they transferred to other unions. It was urged that it would be best for all concerned to set up a general sick-benefit system in order that all members might profit alike. It was further argued that payment of a sick benefit would enable the international union not only to obtain members but also to hold them.

For a time an effort was made to coordinate the sick-benefit systems of local unions. In 1882 local unions were urged "to adopt a sick-benefit fund, and in cases where a visiting member or members are taken sick to make such provisions in their by-laws as to pay the amounts to which they are entitled, and exchange orders or checks for the same, provided said members are in good standing."[†] Nothing was done, apparently, to carry out this utterly impracticable plan. Soon afterward all local unions were urged to adopt uniform systems of benefits so that hardship need no longer be suffered by travelling members. It was pointed out, however, that many local unions had so few members that they could not afford to pay any benefits whatever, especially when part of the men were idle.

[†] Constitution, 1882, p. 36.

Constant agitation in favor of international sick benefits finally led to favorable action in 1895. Provision was made for the payment of five dollars per week after January 1, 1896, to sick and disabled members, unable to work, after the first week's sickness or disability, provided such incapacity had not been caused by immoral conduct. Benefits were allowed for thirteen weeks in any one year, whether continuous or not, to anyone who had been a contributing member for not less than six consecutive months and who did not owe more than twelve weeks' dues. In order to prevent delays and tedious formalities in administration, payments were to be made directly by the local unions from sick funds derived from setting aside eight cents per week out of each member's dues. An international officer, known as the financier, was created whose duties in part were to be concerned with the administration of the sick-benefit feature. He was instructed to keep account of the sick-benefit tax collected by each local union and the benefits paid individual members. He was also ordered to compute annually the average per capita sick benefits paid and, with the consent of the general president, he might arrange an equalization of the sick funds in the treasuries of the local unions by taking a surplus from one local union and depositing it in another where an unusual amount of sickness had occurred.⁸

In order to expedite transfers of funds, the executive board in June, 1896, created a central reserve, or a "sick-benefit relief fund," at headquarters to be maintained by orders drawn upon the local unions having surpluses. With such a fund on hand it proved an easy matter to relieve embarrassed local unions promptly and to pay benefits as soon as they were due.⁹ The apportionment of eight cents per week per member for maintenance of the sick-benefit fund soon proved to be excessive. After 1897 one cent per week per member was set aside to afford remission of dues to unemployed members and sick benefits were paid out of seven cents per week. In 1917 sick ben-

⁸ Ibid., 1895, art. 17.

⁹ Iron Molders' Journal, July, 1896, p. 279.

efits and out-of-work benefits together were allotted eleven cents per week per member, and no specified amount was given either feature. In 1902 the benefit was increased to \$5.25 per week and in 1907 it was raised to \$5.40. Under both rates, with the deduction for dues, there was left a net receipt of \$5 in place of \$4.75, the net amount from 1895 to 1902. In 1917 the convention adopted a benefit of \$7 per week, plus the amount paid in for dues, or \$7.60 in all.

Since 1902 members who have received the full sick benefit for three successive years have been compelled to draw their disability benefits and to assume honorary standing.¹⁰ This rule was adopted to prevent members inflicted with incurable diseases from becoming a drain upon the sick funds, which were intended for temporary relief only. Since the same date a member leaving the jurisdiction of the union has been excluded from sick benefits unless absent for the benefit of his health with the consent of his local union. This rule became important when many molders enlisted for service during the World War. Another change made in 1902 allowed payment of benefits to members who did not owe over thirteen weeks' dues.

The following table shows what the Molders have expended for sick benefits. The total amount paid out has been exceeded by only one other American trade union, the Cigar Makers.

1896.....	\$ 38,511.00	1907.....	\$ 190,117.10
1897.....	36,720.00	1908.....	159,916.20
1898.....	37,710.00	1909.....	120,258.65
1899.....	57,465.00	1910.....	146,110.40
1900.....	102,936.00	1911.....	154,391.40
1901.....	118,515.00	1912.....	154,497.40
1902.....	134,116.00	1913.....	172,792.20
1903.....	178,355.00	1914.....	169,943.20
1904.....	198,214.25	1915.....	138,819.40
1905.....	173,946.25	1916.....	164,611.60
1906.....	176,799.00	1917.....	184,789.50
		Total.....	\$3,010,593.55

¹⁰ During the term 1902-1907 disability benefits were drawn in 89 cases where sick benefits had been paid for three years. In 1907 the rule was adopted that total disability benefits were not to be paid in such cases until one year after payment of the last sick benefit.

Benefits for Honorary Members.—Honorary members were allowed to join the Beneficial Association in 1870 on the same terms as active members. They were also allowed equal privileges with active members upon the establishment of the superannuation benefit in 1874 and upon the adoption of the death benefit in 1878. In 1895, when the sick-benefit feature was established, honorary members who desired to retain their standing for all benefits were required to pay a weekly tax of fifteen cents, ten cents of which went to the local sick funds, and five cents to the general treasury for death and disability payments. If they wished to be entitled merely to death and disability relief, they were to contribute twenty-five cents per month to the international treasury.¹¹

In 1912 the financier reported that the sums paid as sick benefits to honorary members had exceeded dues received from them on sick-benefit account. For the term 1902-1907 the excess had been \$8,643.25; for the term 1907-1912, \$19,979.65. During the 1907-1912 term, receipts from death and disability payments had been only \$1,700 while the expenditures for benefits had been \$5,075. Measures were at once taken by the convention. All honorary members who desired to be in good standing for benefits were put into one group instead of two, as formerly, and all were required to subscribe for both kinds of benefits. Twenty cents per week in dues was assessed, fifteen cents of which was to be retained for sick-benefit funds in local unions while five cents was to be remitted to headquarters for payment of death and disability benefits.¹²

In 1902 it was ordered that no honorary member should be eligible for benefits who had not been a member in continuous active standing for a period of at least five years previous to his application for beneficial participation. In 1907 the period was raised to ten years, and in 1917 to fifteen years. In this way the union has made it impossible for a molder after a short active membership to

¹¹ Constitution, 1895, art. 17, sec. 8.

¹² Proceedings, 1912, pp. 100, 197.

secure for the rest of his life cheap insurance at the expense of working molders.

Out-of-Work Benefits.—Molders, like printers, have always been noted for their roving habits. Until about 1890 travelling members were the object of special solicitude on the part of the general and local unions. Privileges were granted them which were denied to residents, because travelling members were usually thought of as unemployed mechanics in search of jobs. One practice which was adopted by the local unions at an early date was that of loaning money to travelling members. In 1860 the international union took cognizance of the situation and provided that in case it became necessary for one union to grant money for the relief of a travelling member of any other union, the amount so granted should be endorsed upon the back of the beneficiary's card. It then became the duty of the union receiving the card for deposit to collect the sum endorsed upon it and to forward the amount to the local union which had furnished the relief. In 1863 it was further provided that in case the union receiving the card deemed it impossible for the member to pay all that he had been loaned, the balance due might be endorsed upon a new card.¹⁸

By 1866 many local unions began to complain that they were unable to make collections on a large part of the loans which they had made to travelling members. In many instances all trace of the borrowers was lost. Again, unions which received endorsed cards rarely made any effort to collect the loans. Even when they were collected the sums so received were not always forwarded to the creditor unions. In some unions warning was given that no more loans would be allowed. In others it was questioned whether, after all, travelling members deserved help, since many of them had given evidence of being arrogant "bummers" instead of honest mechanics. Doubts as to the desirability of assisting the "hobo" gradually increased

¹⁸ Constitution, 1860, By-Laws, art. 5, sec. 3; art. 10, sec. 6.

to such a degree that during the early nineties many local unions announced that they would no longer be "bull-dozed" by travelling "loafers" who desired "meal tickets." Since that time the local unions have generally refrained from assisting travelling members from funds primarily intended for other purposes.

Irregular relief granted to travelling members was an inadequate and unsystematic way of caring for the unemployed. The first step toward a better arrangement was taken in 1878 when it was decided that members out of employment for at least three months from causes over which they had no control should be relieved from the payment of the monthly dues during the three months or until they could secure employment. After 1882 this rule was superseded by another provision to the effect that an unemployed member should not be suspended as the rules formerly required, if he owed five dollars or more on the first meeting nights of June or October each year.

During 1896 there was much discussion of the possibilities of out-of-work relief. It was argued that such a measure would prevent scabbing, suspension from membership, and general disintegration of the union during dull times. Memories of the panic of 1893 were still vivid in the minds of many unionists. It had become especially necessary to have relief for the unemployed, it was pointed out, because union dues had been greatly increased in 1895. It was urged that this very increase would afford revenue for the payment of out-of-work benefits and that if still higher dues proved necessary, the holding power of the new benefit would more than compensate financially for the increased tax burden, as had been the case in the Cigar Makers. Few members opposed the idea of establishing some sort of out-of-work relief. Many of the leaders of the organization, however, counseled moderation. Upon the suggestion of the executive board several local unions tried out the possibilities of unemployment relief by providing for the remission of dues to all members for periods

varying from eight weeks to six months. These local unions met with fair success in their respective schemes, even though their limited membership offered scanty actuarial material.

In April, 1897, the executive board approved a proposed amendment to the union's constitution which authorized the creation of out-of-work relief. By referendum vote the amendment was adopted and the plan outlined went into active operation October 1, 1897. The new system provided that any member who was unable to secure work, provided his inability were not due to drunkenness or other misconduct, should become entitled "to relief from payment of dues for a period of not more than thirteen weeks in any one year, whether such idleness be continuous or otherwise," the year beginning from the first date on which relief was given. Members of the organization who were not "actually following the trade as a means of earning a livelihood," or who were "temporarily or continuously employed at some other occupation," were excluded. To be entitled to relief from dues it was provided that a molder should have enjoyed good standing for at least six months and should not owe more than four weeks' dues. For every week of idleness after the first two weeks, up to the limit of thirteen weeks, the local financial secretary was to affix an out-of-work stamp in the member's receipt book and the member was to pay no dues. The financial secretary was further required to keep records of all members receiving relief and of all out-of-work stamps received and used, to report monthly to the financier the number of stamps used and, at each meeting of the local union, to read the names of those obtaining stamps and the number of stamps credited to each. The original issue of stamps was to be taken care of by the international secretary who was allowed to use his discretion as to the number of stamps to be sent a local union upon receipt of its order.

The financial operations involved in the unemployment relief caused the creation of another fund, the out-of-work

relief fund. To start the project twenty-five per cent of the surplus in the sick fund in May 1897 was called in, and deposited with the international secretary. Regular receipts thereafter were obtained by the quarterly dispatch of twelve and one half per cent of the sick fund collected by local unions, that is, one cent per member per week, to the international secretary upon order from the financier. When stamps are sent out to local unions the international secretary draws from the out-of-work fund a sum equivalent to the value of the stamps. The sum so drawn is apportioned between the monthly fund and the sick-benefit relief fund.¹⁴ In effect, then, the international union draws on a reserve fund for the benefit of its active funds every time an out-of-work stamp is issued. The local unions simply credit beneficiaries with having paid their dues and are credited in turn by the international union as having collected such dues.

Comparatively few changes in the original system have been made. Members are now eligible to relief who do not owe dues for more than thirteen weeks. Benefits are paid after one week's idleness. These changes have liberalized the system of relief. It has also been decided that a member in receipt of strike or sick benefit is not entitled to the out-of-work benefit. Any member, however, who has drawn thirteen weeks' continuous sick benefits may, if he continues ill, draw out-of-work assistance for his permitted term, provided he was eligible to receive out-of-work stamps previous to obtaining sick benefits. Although the weekly dues are now sixty cents, it is still the practice to transfer only eighteen cents from the out-of-work relief fund to the monthly fund and the sick-benefit relief fund upon the issuance of an out-of-work stamp. Consequently the active funds suffer some loss since the International now receives forty-seven cents on each weekly payment of dues.

For some months after the outbreak of the World War

¹⁴ Iron Molders' Journal, June, 1897, p. 281.

conditions in the foundry business in this country were extremely unsettled. Extensive unemployment resulted. Before long hundreds of union molders and coremakers had received all the out-of-work relief to which they were entitled. The situation became so serious that the executive board in February, 1915, appropriated \$25,000 to be used in issuing "donation stamps" to members who were still unemployed after having received their thirteen weeks out-of-work benefit. By March 31, 1916, conditions had so improved as to make this modification in the plan no longer necessary. Altogether there were placed in members' books 20,762 donation stamps representing a value of \$8,304.80 at forty cents each.¹⁵ At the 1917 convention the executive board was specifically empowered to extend out-of-work benefits as long as might appear necessary during periods of extraordinary industrial depression.

The following table shows the number of out-of-work stamps issued annually down to 1917 and their value:

Year	Stamps	Value ¹⁶
1897 (3 months).....	2,060	\$ 740.00
1898.....	11,840	2,960.00
1899.....	6,060	1,515.00
1900.....	32,175	8,043.75
1901.....	27,125	6,781.25
1902.....	10,300	2,575.00
1903.....	37,200	9,300.00
1904.....	94,470	23,617.50
1905.....	27,100	6,775.00
1906.....	19,190	4,797.50
1907.....	53,813	13,453.25
1908.....	195,523	79,209.20
1909.....	44,252	17,710.80
1910.....	29,530	11,812.00
1911.....	63,240	25,296.00
1912.....	38,472	15,388.80
1913.....	57,215	22,886.00
1914.....	143,337	57,334.80
1915.....	80,075	32,030.00
1916.....	16,225	6,491.00
1917.....	18,670	7,468.00
Total.....	1,008,772	\$356,184.85

¹⁵ Proceedings, 1912, p. 148. It is interesting to observe that the 1912 convention endorsed the principle of dividing work during dull times as a means of combatting temporary unemployment.

¹⁶ Valued at 25 cents from 1897 to 1907; at 40 cents from 1907 to 1917.

Superannuation Benefits and a Molders' Home.—The only plan for a superannuation benefit that the Molders have ever adopted has already been described. Since 1890 there have been many proposals for the reestablishment of the feature. In 1897 it was advocated that the union should establish a "home for the aged and infirm" which, it was believed, would prove a "blessing" to the organization and a "means of bringing thousands of members into the fold."¹⁷ The home established by the Printers undoubtedly provoked this discussion. Officials of the union advised that the cost of up-keep for a home for aged and infirm members would be considerable, that only a few members could be cared for, and that the management would probably prove a source of contention. A superannuation benefit payable to every member was suggested as more advisable, but the expense attached to such a benefit was held to make it undesirable for the time being. Accordingly, at the 1899 convention various proposals for the home or for the benefit were defeated. At the 1917 convention eight different resolutions providing for some form of old age pension were introduced. After receiving a report from Financier Metcalf that so far few international unions had adopted such a plan and that the payment of benefits amounting to five dollars per week would necessitate additional dues of at least twelve cents a week, the convention decided to refer the question to a popular vote.¹⁸ When the referendum was taken a majority was found opposed to the establishment of the benefit probably because it involved so large an increase in dues.

¹⁷ Iron Molders' Journal, January, 1897, p. 24.

¹⁸ Proceedings, 1917, pp. 224-226. The convention endorsed the payment of old-age pensions through governmental agencies.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONTROL OF STRIKES

General Strike Control.—As a general rule, local unions in any trade use less judgment about going on strike than do the larger units of organization. Local bodies see only a part of the industrial and commercial situation. Blinded by provincial prejudices and deluded by false ideas of their strength, local unions, if unchecked, are likely to enter into strikes, fight stubbornly for a time, and then succumb. As an outcome, unionism in certain districts is killed. Independent local action lacks effectiveness in equalizing wages and conditions of employment in competitive districts and in countering the policies of hostile employers' associations, organized nationally. Centralized control over strikes, therefore, has become a necessity for efficient labor organization.

Little can be learned of strike control in the early local unions, except in those of Philadelphia and Buffalo. Both unions provided that "no body of hands shall quit work without the sanction of the general executive committee of the union." Members on a strike "legally ordered" were entitled to a benefit, married men obtaining a larger amount than unmarried. The executive committee was also authorized to defray the travelling expenses of striking members who wished to leave the city in search of work, provided they agreed "not to apply for any further assistance from the union during the strike."¹

When the international union was formed in 1859, strike control was in theory one of its functions, but several years passed before effective direction over strikes was attempted.

¹ Journeymen Stove and Hollow-ware Moulders' Union of Philadelphia, Constitution and By-Laws, 1855, art. 6, secs. 2-4; Journeymen Iron Molders' Union of Buffalo, Constitution, 1859.

The first convention refused international recognition to any strike unless it was sanctioned by the executive committee of the general union, consisting of the president and vice-presidents. When a strike was recognized, the committee was to "*advise* the various local unions of the fact and recommend to local unions what assistance to render."² While the convention was in session a critical strike was in progress at Albany. Without waiting for the newly-formed committee to act, the union resolved "to raise funds for our co-workers" by solicitation from all the local unions. The convention's appeal was answered with promptness and the strike was financed to victory. The general union thus gained great prestige among the hitherto disunited local unions. For the first year of national organization the Molders collected over \$5,000 from local branches for strike purposes.

So frequently and costly were strikes in its early history that in some instances the International Union, "embarrassed by difficulties on all sides," was unable to lend aid. In an endeavor to lessen the burden, the 1861 convention called upon local unions "to discountenance all strikes in their respective localities until every other remedy has been tried and has failed."³ When conciliation bore no results, a local union requiring the assistance of the international "to vindicate its rights and privileges" was ordered to approach the general body for permission to strike. Every subordinate organization having a grievance against an employer was instructed to send to the international president "an official document," passed by a union meeting, signed by the local president and recording secretary, and attested by seal, setting forth the nature of the grievance, the proposed remedy, the number of members involved, and the weekly amount necessary to support a strike. A printed circular of this statement was to be directed by headquarters to the vice-presidents (then the local corresponding secretaries) for

² Proceedings, 1859, p. 12.

³ Ibid., 1861, p. 39.

their votes. In returning their ballots the vice-presidents were to report the number of members in their respective unions who were employed and the average local wage. If a majority of the votes favored the grievance, the general president was to levy upon all members not engaged in the strike a per capita assessment not to exceed two per cent of the weekly wages, payable to the international treasurer.⁴ As soon as the treasurer received an order from the president to pay the benefits which the latter found to be necessary, he was to forward the funds at once to the striking union or unions.

The big Philadelphia strike of 1863 at once tested the new system. To finance this dispute the union raised \$12,642.38. Even this amount was not enough to bring success. The failure of this strike tended for a time to destroy confidence in the International Union and to some extent weakened respect for a central control of strikes. Unauthorized strikes began to increase in number. No penalty was attached to such strikes save the loss of benefits paid through headquarters, but this meant little since local unions often found it possible to finance themselves or to obtain funds from sympathetic sister organizations. Neither was there a penalty imposed upon failure to pay strike assessments. In one case President Sylvis refused to send a deputy to handle an unauthorized strike and protected from expulsion a few members of the local union who remained at work. Beyond certain powers of negation, however, he had no authority.

Another abuse which Sylvis fought was the payment of strike benefits to local unions while in arrears on their international tax. The president urged repeatedly that authority to strike be withheld until such indebtedness was cancelled. In 1867 the convention followed this recommendation by requiring that petitioning unions have on hand, subject to order, the amount due the international. Other important changes were also made at the same time in the

⁴ Constitution, 1861, art. 7.

strike rules. Petitions for authority to strike, first, had to be adopted by a two thirds vote of a local union and, then, had to be sanctioned by a majority of the other local unions acting through their corresponding representatives. Finally there had to be another two thirds vote in the union to order the men out, this vote to be taken within five days after the receipt of notice from headquarters that a petition had been approved. Provision was also made for paying strike benefits of specified amounts, \$5 per week to unmarried members, and \$7 to married members and single members with dependents.⁵

As difficulty was encountered in getting corresponding representatives to vote on strike circulars, it was resolved in 1868 that those not voting should be counted in the negative. Representatives casting favorable ballots were also recorded as voting for a special tax, not to exceed five per cent of members' wages, imposed upon all local unions to pay strike benefits. As no announcement of the vote on any circular could be made until approximately two weeks after a petition was filed and since strike benefits did not arrive until about two weeks later, owing to the treasurer's not being located at headquarters, there were very few "legal strikes." The international union was sometimes so poor that it paid benefits in scrip in place of cash, and local unions on strike were compelled to borrow money from sister organizations.⁶ Deficits in strike pay were usually made up by subsequent conventions which allowed "back claims" to the local unions interested. In view of all these conditions, local unions were disposed to go ahead on their own responsibility. The legitimacy of this procedure was

⁵ Ibid., 1867, art. 7, sec. 2.

⁶ In 1864, \$19,260 was collected and paid out for strike purposes, while the entire returns from the regular per capita tax, levied for general expenses, was but \$4,689.37. Thus the strike expense amounted to over \$3 per annum on each of the 6,000 members. The Albany 1866 lockout cost \$3 per capita. For all disputes for the six years ending January 1, 1866, President Sylvis computed the expense to all branches of the Union as \$1,161,582.26, or \$24 per annum per capita. There is reason to believe this figure too high.

partially recognized by the 1870 convention which ordered benefits paid to two unions which had gone out on unauthorized strikes.

Radical changes in the strike rules were made in 1870. It was provided that strikes should be considered sanctioned if there was not a "negative vote of two thirds" on circulars. Failure to vote meant an affirmative ballot. Each circular was to contain two proposals: (1) that the local union applying for authorization receive financial aid, (2) that it receive moral aid. If the second proposition only was endorsed, the local union was to receive no benefits but the work in dispute could be struck. Finally, in sending out a strike circular the international president was to inform each union of the exact weekly amount required from it to sustain the walkout. If a vote favorable to financial aid was returned, local unions were left to collect their apportionments in any way they saw fit, provided only that weekly remittances were made to the general treasurer.⁷ Under these rules there proved to be no difficulty in obtaining strike authorization. Almost every grievance, "just and unjust, in season and out of season," was sanctioned, largely because the corresponding representatives would not vote on strike circulars and thus were counted in the affirmative. A few unauthorized walkouts continued to occur, chiefly because local unions did not wish to wait from two to four weeks before sanction and benefits could be obtained.⁸

In 1874 President Saffin proposed (1) that each union, acting through its corresponding representatives, be granted as many votes on strike circulars as it was entitled to in convention, (2) that the president be allowed to use facts in his possession in asking local unions to vote "yes" or "no" on circulars, and (3) that, together with the vice-presidents,

⁷ Proceedings, 1870, pp. 74, 75.

⁸ Owing to the slow process of levying, collecting and forwarding strike benefits, President Saffin anticipated the situation on two occasions and levied assessments, amounting to \$3,000, in advance. In neither case was his action approved by the convention (Ibid., 1872, p. 7; 1874, p. 11).

he be clothed with authority to refuse further financial aid to strikes hopelessly lost. All of these suggestions were adopted to the great improvement of the strike rules.⁹ It was also provided that two thirds of all the local unions must vote in the affirmative in order to authorize a strike. To secure a full expression of opinion a fine of ten dollars was placed upon all local unions whose representatives failed to respond promptly to a strike circular. The 1874 convention also sustained a number of decisions relative to strike control made by President Saffin the year previous. These held (1) that no member could strike a job, (2) that no shop committee could order a job or shop to be struck, (3) that members employed in a shop could not strike the shop, and (4) that no bill of grievances could be issued when the men involved had quit work.

In spite of these improvements President Fitzpatrick soon afterwards declared that the "strike laws" were about as "bad as they could be made." The method of voting on circulars was too slow and cumbersome, especially since several local unions had been organized on the Pacific coast. Local unions were, in his opinion, unlikely to exercise wise judgment in voting since their own interests rather than the justice of a cause was generally the first consideration with them. Strike assessments were also hard to collect as but few local unions levied regular taxes to meet them. In July, 1878, strike tax amounting to \$2,694.70 was still due. Finally, repeated unsanctioned strikes occurred for which there was no fitting penalty. Newly formed unions especially erred in this respect. Loans and grants by various local unions to others engaged in unauthorized strikes were not infrequent.

A drastic reorganization of strike rules was made by the 1882 convention to obviate most of the difficulties just indicated. Local unions were instructed to lay their grievances before the president whose duty it became to visit the dis-

⁹ Ibid., 1874, pp. 11, 86, 92. As early as 1867 Sylvis urged that the president be granted power to "open shops illegally closed."

turbed localities, in person or by deputy, and to examine into the facts with a view, first of all, of reaching amicable settlements. When peaceful solutions could not be obtained, disputes were to be laid before the executive board (then composed of the five vice-presidents) which, in conjunction with the president, was to "have absolute control of all strikes and lockouts." The board was to see "that no more strikes are on hand at any one time than the organization is able to handle" and it was ordered that "the whole prestige and force of the National Union, financially and otherwise," be concentrated "in the direction most needed." As a cure for unauthorized strikes, it was made "a sufficient cause for expulsion should any local union attempt to assume responsibility for striking without their grievance having the sanction of the executive board."¹⁰ A "strike reserve fund" secured through a per capita tax of one dollar per year was also created for the support of strikers until the regular assessments could be collected. Praiseworthy as were these new provisions, they did not cure every ill. The "strike reserve tax" did not yield enough money to care for such strikes as were sanctioned and this fact was made an excuse for not obtaining sanction. Again, since the executive board was more reluctant than the local unions had been to give permission to strike, petitioners whose cases were dismissed frequently determined to carry on independent strikes after secretly issuing "begging circulars to local unions and other labor organizations for assistance." In many instances, as in previous years; the money obtained in this manner consisted of funds taken out of the monthly tax due the International. One great series of independent strikes involved practically every union from Pittsburgh to Quincy, Illinois. In no case, however, did the executive board deem it advisable to suspend an offending union.¹¹

In 1890 Martin Fox was elected international president. Under his effective leadership the executive board deter-

¹⁰ Ibid., 1882, pp. 76, 79.

¹¹ Ibid., 1886, p. 9.

mined upon a strict enforcement of the strike rules and decided never to sanction a strike unless there was a sum in the treasury sufficient to ensure prompt payment of strike benefits. From the day Fox went into office, benefits have been paid in every instance, a fact well calculated to create respect for the general union. The 1890 convention increased the per capita tax from twenty-five to forty cents per week, and, of this amount, twenty-three cents went to pay strike, death, and disability benefits, and the headquarters' expenses of the organization. At present, out of the sixty cent dues established in 1917, thirty-six cents is allotted these expenditures. While Fox insisted upon strict discipline within the organization, it was not until about 1900 that threats to withdraw charters for unauthorized strikes were actually carried out. Effective penalties imposed upon Chicago and San Francisco unions put a damper upon further local "rule or ruin" practices. In 1907 a new rule was adopted granting the president and executive board power to suspend members refusing to obey instructions to return to work when out on unauthorized strike. Unsanctioned strikes are now practically a thing of the past. The power of the International is too strong to be resisted by any local union. Insubordination has been cured because members know that any violation of strike rules is quite certain to be punished and that all authorized strikes will receive full financial support.¹²

In 1899 a flat strike benefit of \$7 per week was authorized. In 1912 weekly dues of forty cents were ordered remitted in addition. In 1917 the benefits were increased to \$9 per week, plus the regular dues of sixty cents. Since 1909, when the international treasurer took up his office at the Cincinnati headquarters, delays in forwarding strike pay have been abolished. In 1895 it was voted to pay benefits

¹² To aid the executive board in acting on over one hundred grievances in April, 1906, all the business agents were called in for consultation. Since that time business agents have frequently been summoned to advise the board.

only after the first week of a strike. The same rule obtains at present.

Where grievances have arisen in connection with any shop or shops, local committees and officers have always carried on the preliminary negotiations with employers. For many years after the formation of the international union practically all collective bargaining was conducted by the local unions. As the general body gained power and prestige, however, it began to receive calls for assistance in handling local questions. In 1879 the policy of sending out special organizers was inaugurated. These agents have often been used to handle strikes and negotiate settlements for local unions. Business agents of conference boards have also served under the president's direction as investigators of grievances. Still more important than special organizers in the work of conciliation have been the staff officers of the International Union. When the vice-presidents were originally put on a salary basis, it was planned to use them chiefly as organizers, but gradually they became "more properly speaking the trained diplomatists of the organization, whose tact, knowledge and shrewdness" enabled them to act as skilled negotiators, preventers and managers of strikes and lockouts, advisors and educators of the local unions.¹⁸ That the personal investigation of grievances has been of value is clearly shown by figures for the term of 1895-1899. In this period 392 grievances were investigated of which 306 were adjusted without strikes. Under the present rules the president or his deputy, that is, a vice-president, organizer, or business agent, "in conjunction with the local committee," is supposed "to proceed to the place of difficulty to investigate the cause of the trouble" within ten days after headquarters has been notified of a grievance.

Sympathetic Strikes.—At various times down to 1890 molders struck in sympathy with stove mounters, pattern makers, and machinists. The number of grievances sup-

¹⁸ Iron Molders' Journal, May, 1899, p. 220.

ported was not large and none of the trades assisted asked for the adoption of a sympathetic strike policy. After 1890 the weaker metal trades began to appeal with some frequency for the help of the Molders during labor difficulties. As soon as this tendency became manifest the executive board insisted that the local unions proceed with caution before lending strike support to the appellants. While certain molders contended that their union should observe the old motto of the Knights of Labor, "An injury to one is the concern of all," the board expressed strong disapproval of inconsiderate sympathetic strikes and "warned locals that before entering upon a strike of this sort they must consult the best interests of their own trade and obtain the sanction of their recognized international officers."¹⁴

In 1894 the Federated Metal Trades was organized by the Machinists, the Boiler Makers, the Metal Polishers, the Blacksmiths, the Pattern Makers, and the Molders under the auspices of the American Federation of Labor. The by-laws of the organization placed "a salutary restriction upon the tendency of a local body to rush into an ill-advised conflict" by recognizing the right of each trade to enter upon or refrain from sympathetic strikes, as it might see fit.¹⁵ After 1896 the federation was discontinued. During its brief career it accomplished little of note. The Molders apparently took but slight interest in its activities. Following the dissolution of the Federated Metal Trades the policy of the Molders, so far as sympathetic action was concerned, became somewhat more conservative. In April, 1897, the executive board issued a statement of which all local unions were enjoined to take strict account. The board declared that while it would endeavor to render all possible service and assistance to sister bodies, if aid were to be granted, it was to be only on condition that before an allied trade undertook to strike it should lay the whole grievance

¹⁴ Ibid., July, 1896, p. 277.

¹⁵ Ibid., January, 1897, p. 15.

before the Molders for their investigation. After due consideration the president and board would then decide whether or not the local union or unions would be justified in participating in a strike with the petitioning trade if the dispute could be settled in no other way. In brief, sympathetic strikes were to follow the same course as other strikes, with the addition of advance notice from the trade whose grievance was the primary thing at stake. The position taken by the executive board was affirmed by the convention of 1899 and the same rules still hold.

In 1900 the Machinists and the National Metal Trades Association entered into a desperate struggle over the nominal issue of the shorter work day behind which lay the real issue of the closed shop. The severity of this conflict, together with the rapid development of comprehensive employers' associations in all departments of industry, set trade unionists in the metal trades once more to thinking about the possibilities of a federation as a means of defense. As a result the unions quickly formed a temporary organization¹⁶ and finally in 1903 a constitution and by-laws were adopted for what was called the Metal Trades Federation. Since the contemplated federation appeared unlikely to be successful as several of the unions were weak and inexperienced, the convention of 1902 voted to leave the question of affiliation to the incoming officers. The latter subsequently decided to keep free from the federated movement when they discovered that affiliated unions were required to call sympathetic strikes if a two thirds vote of the general unions, acting through their executive boards, resulted in favor of supporting the grievance of one of the allied trades.¹⁷

The Federation, like its predecessor, lived only a year or

¹⁶ The organizing trades were the Machinists, the Pattern Makers, the Metal Polishers, the Blacksmiths, the Boiler Makers, the Allied Metal Mechanics, the Core Makers, and the Electrical Workers.

¹⁷ Other unions which later decided to remain independent were the Pattern Makers and the Boiler Makers.

two and produced many disappointments for its supporters. The movement for some form of alliance, however, continued. Accordingly a meeting was held at Cincinnati in 1906, attended by representatives of the Machinists, the Blacksmiths, the Pattern Makers, the Metal Polishers, the Boiler Makers, and the Molders. Taught by the lessons of the past, the officials opposed the idea of an offensive and defensive alliance. Now, even more than in previous years, "the stronger unions looked dubiously upon a proposition which invited entanglements on behalf of a weaker ally; the high-dues union looked askance at the low-dues ally."¹⁸ The conference, therefore, came to the conclusion that wisdom dictated the formation of a Federated Metal Trades whose sole function should be that of organizing. When the plan came before the Molders' convention of 1907 nothing more definite was done than to endorse some "practical form of federation" as a means of combating hostile employers. But while the union did not see fit to sanction the work of the 1906 conference, it authorized the president and two other members, named by the convention, to call another conference of the allied trades, provided the idea was approved by a referendum. The general vote, when taken, proved favorable to the project. As a result of the call which the Molders' committee sent out, a convention was held which induced the American Federation of Labor to create a Metal Trades Department at its 1907 session. The functions of this body are to promote local metal trades councils, to adjust trade and jurisdictional disputes, and to assist in the organization of the local unions. Its rules provided originally that if a strike were inaugurated by one trade, other trades within the same local council should not join in the struggle without the consent of their respective international unions. Since membership in the Department was made compulsory for all metal trades unions belonging to the American Federation, the Molders affil-

¹⁸ Proceedings, 1907, p. 18.

iated and their executive board urged all local unions to join the councils in their districts. In 1911 the board instructed the international officers to further the policy of making agreements with large corporations through the Department wherever practicable. The 1912 convention recommended that an effort be made to have agreements with employers terminate at the same time as agreements between the same employers and other organizations. It also provided that if the skilled melters and furnace men in brass foundries were willing to join in strikes with molders, the executive board should give consideration to their financial support.

Relations between the Molders and the Department were entirely harmonious until 1913 when the Department provided that general strikes by the metal trades could be called if approved by a two thirds vote of the allied unions in any local council. Any organization which refused to obey the strike order issued by the president and executive council of the Department was to be suspended. No union affiliated was to sign agreements governing shops where other affiliated unions were interested except upon approval of the Department's executive board. The Molders' entire delegation at the convention where this rule was adopted were in strong opposition to its enactment. They held that the Department thereby became superior in authority to the component unions, its creators, and that the autonomy of the latter was destroyed. Shortly afterward the executive board declared that the union would not follow the dictates of the Department and steps were taken to bring the question before the executive council of the American Federation of Labor. After hearing the case the council proved to be of the unanimous opinion that the Department's scheme was a violation of the constitution of the Federation which guaranteed autonomy to the affiliated unions. At the 1914 convention of the Federation the difficulty was composed. Membership in all the various departments of that

body was made purely voluntary. Moreover, no department was to "enact any law or adopt any policy which aims to force a minority of the affiliated organizations to do something to which they are opposed, or which is contrary to their methods of procedure as provided by their respective constitutions."¹⁹ Recent relations between the Molders and the Department have been amicable. Local unions have joined metal trades councils and in some places sympathetic strikes have been entered into.

The question may now be asked, Why have the Molders always been so conservative about undertaking joint strike action with allied unions? It should be clearly understood that the Molders have never objected to sympathetic strikes as such and that they have never entered into agreements to refrain from sympathetic strikes. They have merely insisted that they should be governed by their own regulations rather than be subject to the desires of some other organization. After years of effort they have succeeded in establishing discipline and businesslike methods. A splendid financial system has been developed. National and local trade agreements have been negotiated and observed. On the other hand, some of the other metal trades unions are of recent origin, have insufficient discipline, possess small financial resources,²⁰ think little of business methods, and are numerically weak. If the Molders were compelled to go out on sympathetic strike every time an allied trade called for help, they would soon waste their strength. The weaker unions could offer the Molders very little assistance.

Ostracism and Lockouts.—Since 1876 it has been provided that if a member is thrown out of employment for acting as a committeeman, for following out the instructions of his union, for asking such prices as may be deemed proper, "or for any differences arising therefrom between

¹⁹ International Molders' Journal, December, 1914, pp. 988-990.

²⁰ On two occasions when joint action of all the metal trades unions took place, it was found shortly after the strikes occurred that a majority of the unions involved were unable to pay strike benefits to their members (Ibid., December, 1913, p. 1034).

employer and member, or if a member is ostracized for union principles," a local committee shall be appointed to inquire into the case. If it is discovered that an unwarranted discharge has taken place, the international president orders weekly strike allowance paid the member until he procures employment, or until such time as the executive board deems it advisable to stop the allowance. Members working in open or non-union shops, where it is impossible to enforce union rules, have not been allowed to obtain ostracism benefits, if discharged for refusal to violate union principles, unless they have been specifically authorized by local unions to act in their behalf. Since 1912 ostracized members have been paid ten dollars per week, plus the amount of the weekly dues. Ostracism benefits have been placed higher than ordinary strike benefits in order to encourage the individual unionist to stand up for union principles even when quite alone and without the stimulus of joint action by all the men in his shop.

The Molders have found that it is not always easy to distinguish between a strike and a lockout, but it has been necessary to make a distinction on account of the difference in the application of benefits. In 1874 President Saffin ruled that a lockout took place in the case of "an employer demanding of members that they shall sign contracts, or that they shall work for store pay, or [who] shall force them to work 'bucks' [helpers] or quit, or demand that they shall quit the union or the shop."²¹ This decision was upheld by the convention. In 1886 it was further provided that "in cases of lockouts when the employer proposes getting his work made in shops other than that owned by him, it shall be the duty of all members . . . to refuse to work on said jobs, in which case they shall be considered locked out or upon strike."²² This rule, with some amplifications and alterations, has been continued down to date.

²¹ International Journal, July, 1874, p. 4.

²² Constitution, 1886, art. 8, sec. 7.

The endorsement of the executive board must be secured at present to make a lockout official.

In 1870 the union provided that lockout benefits should not be paid for the first week after official recognition had been accorded. Later on it was decided to pay benefits from the date of the lockout, and, still later, to pay them from the date when a shop started with non-union men. Finally, the executive board voted in 1909 to consider each case on its own merits. At present the ordinary strike funds of the union suffice to pay all lockout and ostracism benefits. Lockout benefits have always been of the same weekly amounts as strike benefits.

CHAPTER IX

NATIONAL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The first strike by union molders began in Philadelphia on May 16, 1855, and involved all but one of the stove and hollow-ware shops in the city. The strike was settled when the firms met the men, who had formed what later became local union No. 1, and withdrew the demand for a reduction which had caused the difficulty. A second strike was called in Philadelphia in 1857 which proved unsuccessful. In 1858 strikes occurred in Providence, Port Chester and Albany to regain prices paid prior to the panic of 1857. The Albany employers combined in a "Founders' League" to fight the local strike and even went so far as to try to perfect a national association of foundrymen. They failed in the latter plan largely because the Philadelphia employers, who apparently had a strong association of their own with which they were well satisfied, refused to enter a general combination. During the next few years, the number of strikes increased to such an extent as to cause employers genuine alarm and to lead them to organize in many localities.

In 1861 it came to the knowledge of the union that "the foundry employers of Massachusetts have formed combinations, whereby the employees from one shop are prevented from going to work in another without the consent of their employer." In response to this movement the union declared that "we look on such combinations on the part of capital against labor as having a tendency to deprive workmen of that liberty to which they are, and of a right ought to be, entitled, and that we will discountenance and oppose such combinations by every means within our power."¹ It

¹ Proceedings, 1861, p. 31.

does not appear, however, that any disputes arose in connection with the combinations mentioned. In 1863 seventeen foundry firms in Louisville, New Albany and Jeffersonville formed the Iron Founders' and Machine Builders' Association of the Falls of the Ohio. The organization proposed to resist all restrictive local union demands and to cooperate with similar associations in other cities "in all the measures to be taken in our or their own defense."² St. Louis employers organized in 1860, again in 1862, and again in 1864, for the express purpose of "smashing the union," but they accomplished little or nothing.

In the spring of 1864 "several parties employing bench molders" in Connecticut met in New Haven to formulate a plan for escaping from the "dictation" of unionism, and organized the American Iron Founders' Association. At a second meeting held at New York and attended by foundrymen from New England, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, it was the consensus of opinion that "the necessity of an organization of employers must be apparent to all who desire to manage their own business without being controlled by outside 'committees' or 'strikes,' and that such an organization would be beneficial both to them and to their employees." After some discussion it was decided to extend the scope of the association so as to include the employers of floor molders and future meetings were arranged for.³ In the spring of 1865 the principal foundrymen of Detroit and vicinity determined to "break up the factious interference of the Trades' Unions." Jobs were classified and maximum wage rates were agreed upon. Molders going on strike at one plant were denied admission to any other shop in the combination. Through a circular

² Fincher's Trades' Review, October 3, 1863. Reprinted in Commons and Andrews, *Documentary History of American Industrial Society*, vol. ix, pp. 89-97. Men going on strike were to be black-listed and their names were to be sent to similar associations.

³ Fincher's Trades' Review, May 28, 1864. Reprinted in Commons and Andrews, vol. ix, pp. 97-99.

letter sent to foundries in other cities an effort was also made to blacklist strikers wherever they went.⁴

So general became the organization of employers that in 1865 President Sylvis called attention to the combinations then existing "for the express purpose of destroying our union." The only effect of the movement thus far, he said, had been to stimulate the organizing activities of the journeymen. Sylvis concluded by challenging the hostile forces to a trial of strength.⁵ In the following year the gage of battle was accepted by the Iron Founders' Association which brought about what is known as the "great lockout." This struggle involved ten local unions whose membership were chiefly employed in the stove branch, and extended from Albany and Troy to Indianapolis and Richmond, Virginia. About 1,800 strikers figured in the dispute. The main points at issue were the employers' demands that journeymen work with helpers, that union shop committees be given up, and that foundrymen should determine the number of apprentices. The most important feature of the lockout was an attempt made by President Sylvis to promote an understanding between the organized employers and the union. During 1866 and 1867 the Association held two conventions, one at Albany and one at Cincinnati. Sylvis visited Albany at the time of the local meeting and in a letter asked the convention for a conference. He congratulated the employers "upon coming together for the purpose of organization" and suggested that a "mutual and beneficial understanding" be entered into for the purpose of harmonizing the interests of the foundrymen and their employees. No reply was made to this communication, but the employers' demands, mentioned above, were at once published, and the lockout began. "After an idleness varying from one to two months the employers' association was disrupted, the

⁴ Fincher's Trades' Review, July 8, 1865. Reprinted in Commons and Andrews, vol. ix, pp. 99-102.

⁵ Proceedings, 1865, p. 14.

notices were withdrawn, and the molders returned to work."⁶

In 1872 the National Stove Manufacturers' Association was organized. The Molders at once addressed a congratulatory resolution to this body commending its efforts to secure for its members "a just and equitable price for their wares, sufficient to fully compensate them for the capital invested, and the labor incident to making their business a success." Yet the Association was notified that the union would "resist by all lawful means any and every effort made to deprive the molders of their right to demand and receive a fair equivalent for their labor, or to abridge their right to fix a price for that labor."⁷ No reply, apparently, was ever received. Ostensibly the National Association was organized to regulate the selling prices of stoves, to promote the introduction of new foundry methods, and to diffuse knowledge concerning the trade. Many molders, however, felt that "part of its mission was to antagonize trade associations," since its leaders, for the most part, ran non-union shops. By 1876 this view had gained rather general acceptance in union ranks and it was openly charged that there was "proof positive of some secret arrangement between bosses, arrived at while attending their convention," because, after each meeting of the Association, "war was declared against the molders in some section."⁸

At Troy and Albany the manufacturers in 1877 demanded that the journeymen accept wage reductions, renounce their union membership, sign individual contracts and employ helpers. A lockout resulted and although employers elsewhere declared that they were not in the combination, "it was painfully evident such was not the case, for as soon

⁶ Frey and Commons, "Conciliation in the Stove Industry," Bulletin of the Bureau of Labor, January, 1906, p. 134. A unique feature of the lockout was the employment by Sylvis of "a small secret police force" to secure information of the employers' movement.

⁷ Proceedings, 1872, p. 80. Partly because they feared employers' associations, in 1872 the Molders adopted a ritual and became temporarily a secret, oath-bound body.

⁸ Iron Molders' Journal, May, 1876, p. 712.

as a shop was ready to start [that is, for spring trade], South, East, or West, the molders found the same odious demands made upon them" coupled with the notice that in the future there would be nothing but open shops. Other lockouts then occurred from which the union emerged "intact and unconquered."⁹

After 1880 the National Association displayed increased signs of hostility toward the union. In 1882 one of its members condemned the latter for "its one-sided, cast-iron rules" and labeled it a "hydra-headed power, which threatens the best interests of both employer and employee."¹⁰ In 1884 a committee of the Association, reporting on the "subject of labor," accorded "all honor to those courageous men who have maintained or recovered control of their shops," thus setting a "brilliant example to those of us whose necks are still under the galling yoke of Trades Unionism—a servitude both disgraceful and unprofitable." In conclusion the committee asked that something be done to "rid us of this dreadful incubus."¹¹ After further complaints had been registered against unionism in 1885, the National Association decided in the following year to form a separate organization, known as the Stove Founders' National Defense Association, for the distinct purpose of dealing with labor questions.

Members of the National Association were not required to join the Defense Association but as a matter of fact the latter embraced practically all the larger firms in the stove and furnace industry.

The Stove Founders' National Defense Association.—The objects of the Defense Association were stated to be "resistance against any unjust demands" of workmen "and such other purposes as may from time to time prove or

⁹ Ibid., December, 1877, pp. 546-547. In 1878 the union adopted a "visible sign . . . for the use of travelling members" as a measure of precaution against imposters or detectives used by hostile employers.

¹⁰ Ibid., November, 1882, pp. 1-2.

¹¹ Ibid., February, 1884, p. 10.

appear to be necessary for the members thereof as employers of labor." Its members obligated themselves to oppose unfair demands "by the united action of all members." For administrative purposes the country was divided into four districts, namely, New England, the North Atlantic Seaboard, the Middle West and the South, and the Trans-Mississippi. The by-laws of the Association provided that district committees should hear and pass upon labor grievances, subject to appeal by members to the general executive committee. If the investigating committee decided a labor grievance in favor of a member and a strike resulted, the committee was empowered to choose one of three methods of defending the member, namely: (1) making in some other shop such work as he might require, (2) procuring men for him to do the work in his own shop, and (3) affording him compensation for loss in production. Members were subject to suspension by the president or to expulsion by a majority vote of the organization for "refusal or failure to comply with the requirements of the committees or officers or with the obligation of membership. . . ."¹² Strong central control thus existed. The Association was financed by regular assessments based upon the number of molders employed and by "emergency taxes." An officer known as the commissioner, later called the secretary, was secured to act as the active labor agent of the Association.

In March, 1887, the molders employed by the Bridge and Beach Manufacturing Company of St. Louis went on strike for increased piece rates. As the concern was a member of the Association, the latter promptly came to the Company's support. The struck patterns were sent to the shops of other members in the same district, whereupon the molders in these shops refused to handle the "scab" patterns and even declined to make other jobs while such patterns were in the shops. The patterns were then removed to other districts where, in turn, the same reception awaited

¹² Frey and Commons, pp. 143-144.

them. Before they reached the second district, the North Atlantic Seaboard, the Molders' executive board ordered members therein to work on the patterns and, at the same time, it asked for a conference with representatives of the Association. The request was granted, but no settlement could be reached. The employers then announced that their shops would close indefinitely "and what began as a series of strikes in the western districts ended as a lockout in the eastern districts." About 5,000 molders were thrown out of work in fifteen of the largest stove-foundry centers between St. Louis and Albany. The struggle continued until June when the patterns were recalled and Bridge and Beach had their work done at home by molders furnished by the Association. In other shops strikers returned to work under the old conditions.¹³

Both parties claimed the victory: the Association, because it had enabled Bridge and Beach to make their patterns; the union, because it had successfully withstood an evident attempt to destroy it. "Whatever may be said as to the claims of victory, it is certain that each party was strongly impressed with the stability of the opposing organization."¹⁴ During the next four years there were only four strikes which were supported by the Association. One of these contests, at Pittsburgh in 1890, was settled by the officers of the Association making a written agreement with the local union. "The settlement was satisfactory to both sides, and made it quite plain that if an agreement could be made after a strike had been called and losses suffered, it would be possible to make just as satisfactory an agreement before the strike. How to bring about such an agreement was now a matter of frequent consultation between the leading members of both organizations."¹⁵ In 1888 it was proposed in the Molders' convention that a committee be appointed to confer with a like committee from the De-

¹³ Ibid., p. 144.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 145.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 146.

fense Association for the purpose of fixing a scale of prices. The resolution was defeated, but the idea involved in it lived on. Prospects for a conference were then discussed unofficially, and finally the union was assured that the Association would grant a request for a joint meeting of representatives. Accordingly, the 1890 convention instructed the executive board to ask for a conference and empowered it to appoint three stove-plate molders to assist in the deliberations.

On March 25, 1891, representatives of the two associations met in Chicago. Resolutions were drawn up to govern the dealings of the two bodies for the following year. Strikes and lockouts were condemned and "the principle of arbitration" was endorsed. It was resolved that whenever a dispute occurred between a member of the Association and the molders in his employ, when a majority of the latter were union members, which could not be settled amicably between the two parties, the case in question should be referred to the presidents of the two associations or to their deputies. If these representatives failed to effect a satisfactory settlement, the presidents, by mutual agreement, were authorized to summon a conference committee, composed of three members from each side, whose decision by a majority vote was to "be final and binding upon each party for the term of twelve months." Pending the investigation and adjudication of a grievance neither party was to take action. No vote was to be taken in conference except by a full committee or by an even number from each association.¹⁶ When the plan adopted by the conference was submitted to the two organizations for vote, it was adopted by large majorities on both sides with the unwritten understanding that it would be renewed if found satisfactory. The union also altered its strike laws in conformity with the new arrangement. The first agreement in America be-

¹⁶ Iron Molders' Journal, March, 1891, p. 4. Since 1910 each party has been entitled to six members on the committee.

tween a national trade union and a national employers' association was thus established.

While the 1891 resolutions provided for what was termed "arbitration," in reality the scheme worked out was one of conciliation. At first some of the molders favored calling in a third party to settle disputes, but the employers objected to this plan on several grounds. An odd man, it was pointed out, would probably have an inadequate knowledge of the stove business and both sides would be tempted to play upon his ignorance in order to win. Under simple conciliation it would be impossible for one party to deceive the other so as to get its representatives to vote against the best interests of the trade as a whole. Again, even if a competent third man could be found it was believed that it would be difficult to obtain his services. Arbitration, it was argued, was also likely to multiply issues and to foster demands which would be "extreme, unjust, and even ridiculous." Finally, the foundrymen felt that, apart from the merits of any question in dispute, the odd man would be inclined to favor the labor side.¹⁷ Curiously enough, in 1910 the foundrymen themselves asked for the creation of an arbitrator. The union representatives felt satisfied with the existing system and refused to make a change.

With but two exceptions national conferences have been held annually since 1891. The "regular" conferences were held in March down to 1908, and in December after that date. Occasionally, special conferences have also been called. The agreement itself has never specified when conferences are to be held so that it has been necessary for one side to request the other for the privilege of meeting its representatives. At no time has such a request been denied. Agreements relative to wages have been made for one year only, subject to renewal, whereas agreements relating to other points have had no specified duration. At pres-

¹⁷ Ibid., July, 1901, p. 400.

ent six men on a side sit in the conference. The Molders' conferees have always been chosen by the executive board, with the understanding that three members shall be selected from the "sand heap."

In 1892 the national conference began to legislate upon several questions concerning which a general agreement seemed desirable. Piece prices, hours, apprentices, helpers, and a dozen other matters have since been passed upon. No local grievance has ever been taken up for consideration or adjustment. Neither have "abstract questions of the rights or obligations of either side" ever been discussed. The conferences have always been devoted "to the discussion and adoption of resolutions—general in character and binding upon all members of the respective organizations."¹⁸ Problems of the most serious interest to both sides have been thrashed out without disrupting friendly relations. A spirit of give and take has always characterized the conferences. Neither party has ever insisted upon the immediate granting of demands when the membership of the other has not been educated to see the justice of such demands. For example, the foundrymen patiently waited through conference after conference until the rank and file of the union finally saw the need of a higher apprentice ratio. Again, seven years passed before a satisfactory system had been devised for pricing work made on molding machines.

Both organizations have done their best to enforce the national agreements. With but one exception all disputes arising in shops operated by association members have been settled locally by conferences between the interested parties or between the two presidents or their deputies who, by the way, have usually been one of the union's vice-presidents and the secretary of the Association. In the one case noted, a foundryman who had a dispute with his employees over a reduction in piece prices had the grievance decided against him by the investigating deputies. He

¹⁸ Frey and Commons, p. 154.

appealed to the "conference committee" for a rehearing and was again defeated. He then took the law in his own hands and placed the reduction in force. He was at once expelled from the Association and his molders were ordered on strike.¹⁹ Several local unions have been suspended by the union for stopping work in association shops contrary to the rules of the conference agreements. No authorized strikes have taken place in shops covered by the agreements since the original compact of 1891 was formulated.

In 1898 the union asked that the national conference change the rule limiting the jurisdiction of the agreements to association shops where a majority of the Molders were union men, since action was thereby prevented on disputes in shops where a fair percentage of the journeymen were unionists. The request was favorably received, and a new rule was adopted under which a dispute involving any union member in any association shop might be adjusted under the conference agreements in the usual way. This arrangement soon induced many non-members to join the union so as to secure a hearing on any grievances that might arise. The national conference of 1900 was attended by practically all of those members of the Association who still ran non-union shops. At this meeting the union requested that its rules be considered binding upon these members as on other members of the Association. The union argued that it was incongruous for an employers' association which recognized a union to contain members who continued to resort to individual bargaining. While some non-union manufacturers hesitated to agree to having their shops unionized, it is interesting to note that shortly after this conference the Bridge and Beach Company asked to have its plant organized and requested an agreement with the union.

Until 1917 the conference agreements covered stove molders alone. The union attempted several times after 1903

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 155. In 1917 the Fuller-Warren Company of Milwaukee withdrew from the Association to escape expulsion for refusing to carry out the conference agreements.

to secure recognition for coremakers, but its efforts were unsuccessful, as the foundrymen held that coremakers in stove shops were practically unskilled laborers. Local agreements alone contained rules governing coremakers' work. At the conference of December, 1917, the Association finally agreed to "recognize the coremaker as a molder" and to refer to him "as a molder working at coremaking."²⁰ Molders employed on hot water and steam heater work are not covered by the agreements.

The National Founders' Association.—In May, 1896, the American Foundrymen's Association was organized by several proprietors of machinery and jobbing foundries located within the United States. In its purpose the Association resembled very much the National Stove Manufacturers' Association. At first no efforts were made to formulate a labor policy. On January 26, 1898, the history of the stove branch was again paralleled when the machinery and jobbing manufacturers formed a separate organization to deal with labor matters under the name of the National Founders' Association. The members of the Association were organized into districts and the entire body was governed by an administrative council. In 1901 a commissioner was appointed to take charge of the details of the labor work. The program of the Association proposed the same means for handling labor troubles as those adopted by the stove founders in 1886. Members were permitted to deal with unions as they preferred, except that those who had been assisted by the Association to establish the open shop were required to continue on that basis for at least one year. From 1890 to 1904 about ninety per cent of the heavy machinery shops affiliated with the Association were unionized establishments, while about eighty per cent of the agricultural and malleable shops were non-union.

For some time the union feared that the new organization would be hostile to it, just as the Defense Association

²⁰ International Molders' Journal, January, 1918, p. 2.

had been originally. While he prepared for war, President Fox promptly opened communication with President Gates of the Founders, cited the results of the agreement with the Defense Association and proposed the adoption of a similar arrangement in the machinery and jobbing branch. In response to this advance the Founders at their annual meeting in February, 1899, appointed a committee to meet the union in conference. On March 8, 1899, seven foundrymen and six molders met in New York City and agreed to a set of resolutions. The "principle of arbitration" was endorsed, although a plan for conciliation was in reality adopted. It was provided that "in event of a dispute between the members of the respective organizations," a "reasonable effort" was to be made "by the parties directly at interest to effect a satisfactory adjustment of the difficulty." Failing in this, either party had the right to ask reference of the dispute to the "committee of arbitration," consisting of the presidents of the two associations, or their deputies, and two other representatives from each organization appointed by the respective presidents. A majority vote of this committee was to effect a final settlement. During the period of adjudication there was to be no cessation of work.²¹ National conferences of the parties to the agreement were to be called upon the application of either side. At these meetings each group was awarded an equal voting representation. As in the agreement with the Defense Association, machinery was set up for the settlement of local disputes and the way was left open for the establishment of national rules. Both organizations ratified the proposed program, which thereafter became known as the "New York Agreement."

For a brief period the agreement seemed to operate successfully. Many foundrymen, who had been running open shops, consented to make local agreements in accord with

²¹ Iron Molders' Journal, April, 1899, p. 157.

the general agreement.²² The union met these advances by ordering back to work all molders going on strike in shops affiliated with the Association. While there were surface indications of harmony, it was not long before serious trouble between the two associations emerged. In June, 1899, a second conference was held at which the foundrymen suggested the appointment of a special committee to obtain data and "prepare a schedule of wages they would recommend to be adopted by the two associations, the same to be graded and arranged as in their judgment will best protect the interests of all parties." When the union objected that this proposal contemplated wage differentials which would tend to destroy standard rates by inviting "a general gravitation to the lowest level," the foundrymen refused to sanction a proposal for recognizing "the principle of a minimum wage," the application of which was to be so made as to give "due consideration . . . to the diversified nature of the work."²³ The dispute over differentials versus the minimum wage continued to come up in subsequent conferences. Out of it grew more and more hostility between the two parties, both of which stubbornly stood by their chosen programs.

In June, 1900, a third conference was held. The Association endeavored, through what were later called the "Detroit Resolutions," to obtain recognition of the employer's right to pay either day or piece rates and to employ whomsoever he pleased. Since these measures, if adopted, would have meant a lessening of union control over wages and the acknowledgment of the open shop, the union representatives refused to accept them. Naturally, this clash did not improve the relations between the two associations. Miss M. L. Stecker, who has made a detailed study of the question, concludes that the trouble at this time and at later

²² F. W. Hilbert, "Trade Union Agreements in the Iron Molders' Union," in Hollander and Barnett, *Studies in American Trade Unionism*, pp. 233-234.

²³ *Iron Molders' Journal*, July, 1899, p. 349.

periods arose because the union would not "give up or modify any part of its fundamental law."²⁴ She fails to comment, however, upon the lack of bargaining sense displayed by the Association in making peremptory demands on the union. The foundrymen took an aggressive attitude at the very start and, from first to last, demanded much more than they could reasonably expect. Moreover, at no time in the negotiations did they express a willingness to recognize even one union rule of any importance. If the union was obstinate, the Association, as the younger organization, was guilty of aggressiveness in imperiously presenting its "requests."

It may be well at this point to explain some of the conditions which caused the friction between the Association and the union. The matter can best be explained by contrasting the conditions in the machinery trade with those which obtained in the stove trade. In the latter, the members were "engaged in the manufacture of the same kind of goods," they had "much in common in their business methods and requirements, and their relations with labor could more easily be governed by general rules." In the Founders' Association, on the other hand, the members were "engaged in the manufacture of everything from immense fly-wheels to tea kettles." So dissimilar were their lines of business that it was very difficult to "formulate a general plan satisfactory to all." Consequently their organization endeavored to obtain concessions that would allow the foundrymen full sway in their establishments for making labor adjustments to suit peculiar conditions. Again, the Defense Association was composed mainly of the larger stove foundries, while the Founders' Association embraced shops of all sizes and, besides, it contained some stove foundries whose owners were "unable, or unwilling, to enter the former Association." The small foundryman, like other small employers, was least disposed to concede anything to union demands. The larger interests, in part, at least, felt it advisable to meet labor

²⁴ Miss M. L. Stecker, "The National Founders' Association," in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. xxx, 1916, p. 357.

halfway. Thus there were two diverse elements in the Founders' Association, "one desiring closer relations with the union, for the sake of peace and harmony, and the other desiring to use the immense power of the Association to check, circumvent, or crush the power of the union."²⁵ As time went on the influence of the smaller proprietors came to be felt more and more, so that the breach between the two organizations was continually widened.

In the fall of 1900 there came the first serious break in the relations of the parties to the Agreement. Demands had been made for increased wages in Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Cleveland, and had been referred in the usual manner to the conference board, which was unable to agree. After all peaceful means provided had been exhausted in attempting to reach a settlement, the dispute was left to the decision of force. The two organizations came into conflict in Cleveland in the strike of six hundred molders, including all the local foundries belonging to the Founders' Association. After a bitter contest of six weeks, which cost the Association alone about \$125,000, the dispute was referred to a special committee, and an agreement was reached whereby the molders secured an increase in pay and the discharge of the non-union men employed during the strike. The founders on their part secured a differential in the wage rate between bench and floor molders, and some concessions in regard to working conditions in the foundries. Three members of the Association in Cleveland refused to be bound by the agreement, and continued operations with their non-union molders. The president of the Association stated that the constitution of the organization did not give the power to compel these members to abide by the agreement. For a time the abrogation of the agreement was threatened, but the next general conference tried to patch things up by adopting

²⁵ Hilbert, p. 234. During the early years of the Association tremendous efforts were made to increase its membership. "No method of selection was used and bad risks frequently were taken." Some employers who were notorious for always having strikes were admitted (Stecker, p. 371).

a resolution reaffirming its adherence to the New York Agreement and expressing faith in the ability of the contracting parties ultimately to smooth out all points of difference between them.²⁶

From time to time after 1900 complaint was made that members of the Association in various localities refused to meet union officers in conference and that other members disdained to recognize local wage scales or discharged union shop committees. An even more objectionable practice developed, however, when certain members of the Association inaugurated important changes in shop practices and methods without the consent of the molders and even in spite of their protests. The union demanded that all proposed changes affecting labor within a shop operated by a member of the Association, if unacceptable to the molders, should first be taken up in local conference before they were actually inaugurated. At an informal conference held in April, 1902, the Association's representatives promised to present the union's contention before their administrative council at its next meeting. When the next regular conference was held in the following October, however, the Association's representatives refused to discuss any interpretation of the New York Agreement and insisted that the two parties must first adopt general rules respecting molding machinery, apprentices, piece work, wage differentials, and other technical problems. They declared that they did not wish at the time to fix any of the details of settlement on the matters mentioned, but that they merely sought some understanding as to the "broad principles" involved in them. As the union felt that the foundrymen were aiming at the abolition of its trade regulations, it refused to favor the proposition.

One thing, however, was accomplished by this conference. A resolution was adopted declaring the necessity for a general form of agreement, national in character, for each class

²⁶ Hilbert, pp. 234-235.

of foundries, covering, as far as possible, all points of mutual interest, subject to such modifications in detail as might prove necessary to meet conditions in particular districts. At first efforts were to be confined exclusively to the formulation of a wage agreement covering the jobbing and machinery foundries in accordance with a classification which had already been made by the Association.²⁷ This plan for district agreements applicable to various classes of foundries might have been successful if an effort had ever been made to put it into operation. A national agreement for all foundries would doubtless have proved a failure owing to the diversified character of the business interests connected with the Founders' Association. Nothing was ever done, however, to carry out the proposed plan, although it was endorsed at the convention of the Association in November, 1902. But while the Association took this action, it also instructed its administrative council to make no more local agreements, and it again expressed itself as favorable to a national agreement, provided the Molders would consent to the following:

Equitable conditions relating to apprentices, restriction of output, set day's work, limitation on a man's earning capacity, abolishing of fines imposed on molders for the purpose of limiting an individual molder's production, the right of an employer to employ molding machines or any other foundry appliances in accordance with his best judgment and to maintain equitable piece-work and premium systems, the abolition of a flat minimum wage rate and the establishment of a differential wage rate for molders.²⁸

At a conference in March, 1903, the representatives of the Association offered a "standard agreement" of this character, together with a rule dealing with sympathetic strikes. In case the union accepted the specific propositions of the agreement, the Association offered to concede a shorter workday, which it had previously declared to be a matter for local adjustment only. The union, however, urged the continuance of the New York Agreement,

²⁷ Iron Molders' Journal, November, 1902, p. 942.

²⁸ Ibid., December, 1902, p. 1035.

amended to prohibit the change of established shop practices without the consent of the molders involved, and requested the establishment of a nine-hour day on its own merits, time-and-a-half for overtime and some kind of a basic wage. No agreement was reached as neither party was willing to recede from its position.²⁹

In February, 1904, another general conference was held. At this meeting the spokesman for the Association declared that although the New York Agreement provided that there should be no cessation of work during the adjudication of a dispute, he had a record of forty-seven different occasions where union members had violated the rule. He admitted that in these cases the men had been ordered back to work by their international officers, yet he claimed the agreement had been broken notwithstanding this fact. In reply, the union representatives expressed their disapproval of outlaw strikes and then raised their customary complaint about unauthorized changes in shop practices. The latter matter was made the subject of a prolonged debate but no common ground of understanding could be reached in regard to it. The Association's offer of its national "standing agreement" was then taken up. The Molders' representatives were not willing to give up what they conceived to be a large part of their control over the trade, although they were perfectly willing to discuss plans for a shorter day and regulations dealing with the standard rate. Six days, in all, were consumed by the conference. During its course there were many charges of bad faith by both sides. It was evident that a feeling of hostility had developed. Following this conference the Association's administrative council instructed its members to make no further agreements with union molders unless the stipulations of the "standard agreement" were embodied therein. In no case did the unions consent to this plan and, accordingly, the shops controlled by the Association continued in operation without any agreements being signed.

²⁹ Ibid., May, 1903, pp. 347-348.

While the relations between the two associations were thus strained, another national conference was held at Cincinnati in September, 1904, with the interpretation of the New York Agreement once more as the main issue. It was felt that if this point could be adequately dealt with the parties might be able to get along somehow until the difficulties concerning trade regulations were worked out in further conferences. The meeting seemingly resulted favorably for the Molders, as the following interpretation was adopted:

If any change, whether of wage rate, shop practice or conditions, or any other change affecting the relations or the interests of the members of the parties to the New York Agreement is proposed by one of the parties thereto to which objection or protest is raised by the other party, it is understood and agreed that the status then existing, that is, the status immediately preceding the proposed change, shall not be disturbed by either party pending reference and decision as provided in the New York Agreement.²⁰

In spite of this apparent settlement of one of the most serious problems confronting the contracting parties, the Founders' Association at its convention in the following November abrogated the New York Agreement and announced its intention of putting into operation a policy based upon the "standard form of agreement." The first provision of the plan forbade limitation of output of any sort. Next it was declared that all matters relating to wage systems, types or classes of workmen employed, apprentices, helpers, handy-men, and machines were to be left to the employer's sole decision. No arbitration or conciliation proceedings were to be entered into with strikers nor were outsiders, such as officers of the International Union, to be admitted to any conference between members and their employees. Finally, wages were to be agreed upon mutually between members and their labor force, the terms to be in accord with local and shop conditions. If local unions of molders wished to accept these provisions, the Association interposed no objection to its members making agreements

²⁰ Ibid., November, 1904, p. 829.

with them. Otherwise, no agreements were to be signed. In short, the Association decided to establish the open shop.⁸¹

After the abrogation of the agreement the two organizations plunged into a bitter struggle. Prolonged and expensive strikes and lockouts occurred. For a time the employers had the upper hand since an open-shop wave was then sweeping the country in all lines of industry. Gradually, however, the union began to gain ground and ultimately it succeeded in getting many members of the Association to sign agreements, either as individual foundrymen or as members of local associations. At the present time the union appears to have weathered the storm quite safely and to be reasonably content with its position. In 1916 the Association claimed to have in the shops of its members about one eighth of the molders and coremakers of the country. It also estimated that about eighty-five per cent of its members ran open shops.⁸² If the figures given out by the Association are correct, it is evident that association shops have made a considerably increased use of unskilled or comparatively unskilled labor since 1904.

⁸¹ The Founders' Association contained many members who also belonged to such anti-union organizations as the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Metal Trades' Association, and the Citizens' Industrial Association of America. It is further worth observing that a dull season in the trade arrived in 1904, making the time particularly opportune for breaking off friendly relations with the union.

⁸² In 1912 the Association aided twenty-one members in labor disputes. In 1913 it aided thirty-two. In 1914 only five members received assistance.

CHAPTER X

THE STANDARD RATE

"In order to make any effective regulation concerning the price at which workmen in the trade shall sell their labor to the employers, it is necessary for a union to formulate or adopt a measure for the labor which is to be sold and to fix a price for it. This price is ordinarily called a 'standard' or 'minimum' rate. Below that rate no workman in the union is allowed to sell his labor. The problems which a trade union encounters in formulating a standard rate differ widely according to the nature of the rate involved, i.e., whether it is a piece rate or a time rate. With a price rate, it is the product that is to be standardized. The varieties of product must be classified, the work must be defined, and a system of measurement must be adopted. On the other hand, with a time rate, the difficulty lies in the differing capacities of the workmen."¹

One of the earliest rules of the Molders' Union provided that no member should endanger the job of another member by working at a lower rate of pay or even offering to do so. As far as possible local unions have always tried to secure the inclusion of a specified standard wage in their trade agreements, but not until 1902 was it made obligatory upon international officers to see that all agreements called for such a wage. The standard rate of the Molders is a minimum rate. Foundrymen have always been at liberty to pay their men above the scale.

Piece Rates.—Piece work in the foundry industry has obtained chiefly in the stove branch where it has undoubtedly been "as old as the industry itself." Stove manu-

¹ Barnett, "The Printers: A Study in American Trade Unionism," in Publications of the American Economic Association, vol. x, 1909, pp. 108-109.

facture has always been particularly well adapted to the piece system. Stove patterns are made repeatedly. They enjoy a run for at least one season and, when a popular style of stove has been produced, they may run for several years. Again, the number of pieces in a stove or furnace is comparatively small. It is thus fairly easy to adjust piece prices in a stove shop. The steady output of relatively few castings gives an opportunity to gauge the working time on each unit of product. Furthermore, owing to their specialization on a few patterns, stove molders do not suffer the delays attendant upon turning from one job to another. This condition of affairs enables them to learn how to put up a flask in the quickest possible time.

In the typical jobbing and machinery shop a large number of patterns may be used and the molders may be required to take up new jobs every few days. In jobbing foundries, especially, new patterns may be introduced with considerable frequency. The constant introduction and discard of patterns makes it difficult to tell just what the rate for one casting ought to be as compared with another since sufficient experience in making any one casting may be lacking. The repeated fixing of new prices would cause endless bargaining and the price lists would be interminably long and complicated if the piece system were used. For these reasons day work has been found best in jobbing and machinery shops of the ordinary sort. Within recent years piece work has made some headway in certain types of jobbing and machinery shops. "Specialty shops," such as foundries which make nothing but parts for a particular automobile, have introduced the piece system since they run the year round on a few patterns only. Wherever a few patterns have been made repeatedly by floor or bench molders or by molding-machine operators, conditions have been favorable for the payment of piece prices.

Piece prices in the stove branch were originally paid by the pound or ton. "The growing diversification in the patterns of stoves soon made it necessary, however, to fix

separate prices for each kind of stove, and thereafter, as the subdivision of the work in the making of stoves proceeded, for each piece of the stove."² When the total price for making a stove was divided among the several pieces it became customary to call the piece prices "board prices" from the fact that each pattern was placed upon what was called a "follow board." Accordingly, whenever the molders obtained an increase in wages, they were granted a certain per cent additional upon "board prices."

The regulation of piece-price adjustment in the stove industry has been established under the conference agreements between the union and the Stove Founders' National Defense Association. In 1892 it was decided at the second conference that "the general rate of molders' wages should be established for each year without change." If either party desired alteration of the wages paid, it was required to give notice at least thirty days before the end of the agreement year, otherwise, the wages current were to remain in force during the coming year. Under these arrangements the existing board prices in the shops controlled by the Association were to be taken as a standard. It was left for the annual conferences to decide whether such prices were to be continued or whether a certain percentage was to be added to, or subtracted from, them. Since 1899 the Association has granted increases at ten of the conferences. The increases granted since 1916 have been based upon the original 1892 prices plus the percentages already gained.

During the early years of unionism there were many inequalities in the prices paid for castings in the same shop and district. Whenever foundrymen secured the upper hand, they cut as many prices as possible and when the unions obtained the advantage they forced up prices upon certain pieces or upon an entire class of stoves. When new work came into a shop the molding prices were set without much relation to the prices previously paid for

² D. A. McCabe, "The Standard Rate in American Trade Unions," p. 47, in the Johns Hopkins University Studies, Series XXX, No. 2, 1912.

similar castings but with regard largely to the bargaining strength of employer and union. It soon became the policy of local unions, not merely to secure higher prices, but also to equalize prices on a basis of the labor and skill involved in different jobs. In 1862 local union No. 1 of Philadelphia gave up a demand for a general increase on all castings for an "equalization of stove prices, . . . bringing the lower up to the higher."³ Other local unions followed the same policy, yet even in 1891 there were many cases of inequality in the molding prices paid in a single foundry, while "prices paid for similar work made in separate foundries were subject to inequalities, at times amounting to 40 per cent of the total price."⁴ At the 1892 conference between the union and the Defense Association the following resolutions relative to price equalization were adopted:

The present established price of work in any shop should be the basis for the determination of the prices of new work of similar character and grade.

When new work of a character or grade different from that previously made is introduced into the shop, the basis of price should be the average paid for goods of similar grade or character by competitive foundries. "Competitors" or "competitive foundries," as applied to stove manufacturers, are firms disposing of goods of similar grade in the same market, and not necessarily firms manufacturing in the same district.

Any existing inequality in present prices of molding in a foundry or between two or more foundries should be adjusted as soon as practicable upon the basis set forth in the foregoing paragraphs, by mutual agreement or by the decision of the adjustment committees provided by the conference of March, 1891.

Whenever by improved appliances, new or different methods, or superior facilities introduced by the manufacturers, an increase in the quantity of work produced can be made, the price of molding may be decreased proportionately; Provided that the new price shall not reduce the average wages of the molder who makes it.⁵

In 1903 it was further agreed that the "present established price of work in any shop should be the basis for the determination of the price of new work of similar character and grade, *unless* the presidents of the two organizations, or their representatives, shall decide that the

³ Iron Molders' Journal, May, 1881, p. 1.

⁴ Frey and Commons, pp. 156, 157.

⁵ Iron Molders' Journal, February, 1892, p. 5.

established prices of similar work in the shop are not in accord with the price of competitive goods made in the district."⁶

Whenever it becomes necessary in any shop to adopt new prices or to readjust old ones in accordance with the above agreements, an effort is made at first to secure an understanding between the foundryman and the price committee of the local union involved. When this cannot be done, officers are sent from headquarters by the two associations to take up the matter. As a rule, in such cases the union has delegated a vice-president to represent it and the Association has sent its secretary. When these men visit a foundry together and examine a stove, the price of which is in dispute, the following method is carried out:

They select another stove of similar size, style, and construction, made in the district, whose molding price has already been set and accepted by both the foundryman and the molders and recognized as a standard. This stove is taken apart, piece by piece, and laid out on the floor. The stove to be priced is then compared, piece by piece, the patterns of each stove being laid side by side, and a price is set upon them that will correspond with the prices paid for the stove selected for comparison, due allowance being made for the differences in the individual patterns so far as the labor required to mold them is concerned. By this method guess work is eliminated and a practical rule is applied which meets every requirement. The officers of both sides who give this work their attention have become experts, and their findings are generally accepted without question by the parties affected.⁷

Relative to the problems arising from the use of defective or deficient materials, Professor D. A. McCabe states:

Liability to defective or deficient materials or to the emergence of physical conditions which made production of goods of the proper quality abnormally difficult has raised issues which have been of importance in several trades. The establishment of rules as to when special provisions for payment to meet such conditions shall come into force has given quite as much difficulty as the decision of what is to be paid. Workers of molten iron and glass are especially hindered in securing output by poor materials, and the rules for the determination of when materials shall be considered too poor to be worked at the regular list prices have demanded much attention in these trades.⁸

⁶ Conference Agreements, issued January 1, 1917, Clause 7.

⁷ Frey and Commons, pp. 157-158. Neither the value of a stove nor the number of cubic inches of sand in a flask have ever been considered in fixing piece rates.

⁸ McCabe, p. 65.

The molten iron coming from the cupola is often "dull" or "dirty." Likewise there are cases where cores are imperfect, where insufficient iron has been melted or where "chill cracks" have occurred. "Dull" iron is iron that is too cold to pour properly. Prior to 1896 stove foundrymen often refused to pay for castings made with dull iron, placing the entire loss upon the molder. The molders protested, doing so at times with so much vigor that an open rupture occurred between them and their employers. While there were times when the employer was evidently at fault for providing dull iron, there were other instances when "it was almost impossible to place the responsibility for work lost through this cause, since molten iron loses its life rapidly after being drawn from the cupola. Iron hot enough to run the thinnest pieces would be held at times in the ladle carried by the molder until it was unfit for use. Under such circumstances the loss of work could properly be attributed to the molders' carelessness or lack of judgment. On the other hand, the greater amount of work misrun by reason of dull iron was caused by a 'bad heat,' the iron drawn from the cupola not having sufficient life and fluidity to properly fill the molds. . . . The fact that both foundryman and molder might be responsible for work misrun gave ample opportunity for disputes. . . ."⁹

In 1896 the problems of dull and insufficient iron were taken up in conference. The rule was adopted that when there was a bad heat causing dull iron, the foreman's attention should be called to it. Payment was to be made for work lost from dull iron "only when poured by the foreman's order" or by that of the person next in authority. It was also agreed that when work had to remain over because there was not enough iron to pour, the molders were to be paid for it at one half the regular price. In case of the "breakdown of machinery, or other unavoidable accident," however, no allowance was to be made.¹⁰ These

⁹ Frey and Commons, pp. 130, 181.

¹⁰ Iron Molders' Journal, April, 1896, p. 151.

provisions remained in force for seven years but did not give complete satisfaction to either side. In 1903 the dull-iron rule was changed to read as follows:

When it is shown that the aggregate loss on account of dull iron amounts to 4 per cent of the total value of the work poured by the molders in any one heat, it shall be deemed a bad heat and payment shall be made for all work lost from this cause; it being understood that when more than one cupola is used the molders receiving iron from each cupola shall be considered the same as though they were working in separate shops in making the above computation.¹¹

The new clause proved more satisfactory than the old one since it provided a means of determining just when a heat was to be considered dull. Yet the arrangement did not give complete satisfaction. The molders thought 4 per cent too high a figure. In 1906 the agreement was amended to provide that if the aggregate loss from dull iron throughout a shop should be less than 4 per cent when, at the same time, 10 per cent of the molders lost 10 per cent or more of their work in the aggregate, then such men should be paid for all losses in excess of 4 per cent of their work. Each cupola was still to be considered a separate shop. This provision obtains at present. The original understanding regarding insufficient iron also remains in force with the additional provision that "the cutting through of the cupola bottom is not to be considered as a breaking down of machinery."¹²

From 1906 to 1910 the union representatives complained at the annual conferences that their members had lost much work from dirty iron and asked that such losses be paid for in full. The Association replied that actual losses from this cause were small, because no employer would knowingly purchase iron of an inferior grade and it also held that molders often entered claims for compensation on account of dirty iron when they themselves were at fault because of careless pouring. In 1910 the conference, after reviewing the whole situation, decided that it would be un-

¹¹ Ibid., April, 1903, p. 252.

¹² Ibid., April, 1906, p. 228; Conference Agreements, issued January 1, 1917.

wise to adopt "any sweeping resolution" relating to the subject and that the best plan would be to adjust locally all cases of abnormal loss from dirt or slag. Where work has been lost on account of defective cores, "chill cracks," or over-weight castings, adjustments have also been made by the locally interested parties or by the national officers.

Minor questions affecting piece rates have been those relating to charges for wheeling and cutting sand, "shaking-out" castings, and those concerned with the payment of substitute molders and sub-contracting. For many years it had been the custom of piece-working molders to pay foundry laborers to wheel and cut sand and to "shake-out." Since 1902 the union has endeavored to convince the Defense Association that its members should assume the burden of paying for these services. The Association agreed in 1907 to deliver new sand free of charge but it has refused to give favorable consideration to the other two demands. At the 1914 conference the union finally consented to a fixed scale of discounts to be charged against piece rates when the employer paid laborers for such services as carrying iron to a molders' floor, cutting and trimming sand, shifting weights and sleeves, and "shaking out." Substitute molders, or "cat skimmers," were once paid the regular price rates but since their earning capacity suffered on account of their changes in work, the union succeeded in obtaining an agreement from the Defense Association in 1905 whereby such molders were to receive 15 per cent premium on regular rates for the first three days of their employment and straight rates thereafter, unless they were shifted to new jobs. The sub-contracting issue has never been taken up with the Defense Association, but since 1908 the union has forbidden its members to sub-contract because such a method of operation is likely to result in a cutting of rates.

In the piece-working shops it is necessary to count all the castings and to credit each molder with his output. According to Frey and Commons:

The removal of casting from the foundry to the cleaning room was often done in a slipshod manner, and an opportunity was afforded dishonest foremen to give credit for less work than had been made. Again, castings which were broken through carelessness by other workmen in the cleaning and stove-mounting departments were thrown away. By these methods the molders were frequently imposed upon, and to prevent this they would insist upon having each day's work counted after they had placed the castings at the end of their floor and on the edge of the gangway running through the foundry. This was known as the 'gangway count.'

Many firms refused to adopt this method, and several of the most severe strikes in the union's history resulted. It also happened at times that "some of the work would contain imperfections for which the molder was responsible, and for such work he was not paid. It was 'discounted' against him." This gave the foreman a chance to cheat the journeymen. "To protect themselves on this point the molders would demand the right of seeing all of their 'discounted' castings before they were broken up for remelting. The foundrymen were not always agreeable to granting this privilege. . . ." ¹³ Since 1891 the union has been able to introduce the gangway count into practically all stove shops as the employers have gradually recognized its fairness. Action in conferences with the Defense Association has not been needed. It has also been found possible to settle "discounting" problems by local adjustment or by action on the part of national representatives of the two associations without the formulation of any specific conference agreement on the question.

"As a piece price is set upon each casting, it is necessary for the molder to know the price paid for each piece. . . . Many firms [once] were unwilling to furnish their molders with a list of the prices they were paying for their work, and frequently there were two or three prices on the same piece in the same foundry. This condition easily led to abuses which were the cause of much friction, suspicion, and bitter feelings." ¹⁴ As early as 1866 the international

¹³ Frey and Commons, pp. 128-129.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 128.

union recommended that shop committees be required to make out price books, entering therein all day and piece prices. At the 1896 conference with the Defense Association the union pointed out that "if a uniform price on a similar class of work was to be paid in each district it was evident that the molders as well as the foundrymen should be aware of the prices paid." Convinced of the soundness of this argument, the conference ruled that members of the Association "should furnish in their respective foundries a book containing the piece prices for molding, the same to be placed in the hands of a responsible person."¹⁵ Some members of the Association construed the term "responsible person" to mean a superintendent, a foreman, or an office clerk. The journeymen insisted that such person should be a "representative molder," since the men were the ones whose interests were primarily protected by a price book. The 1899 conference straightened out the tangle by providing that the book should be placed in the joint care of the foreman of the foundry and a responsible molder agreeable to both employer and employees. The 1904 conference further adopted a rule that when prices on piece work had been agreed to, they should promptly be reduced to writing. Since 1913 it has also been provided that the prices on all work should be stamped on the bottom boards of match plates. The price book, however, still remains the official record on piece rates.

Union rules in 1876 required that new work in a stove shop was to be priced by the committee of the local union within six days after its introduction. At the 1896 conference it was agreed that under ordinary conditions, new work should be priced within two weeks. Many employers subsequently proved dilatory in coming to terms on prices within the two-week period while others tried to price work even before it had been "placed in the sand." To both of these practices the union objected. To remedy the latter a conference rule was passed in 1907 to the effect that new

¹⁵ Iron Molders' Journal, April, 1896, p. 151.

work should not be priced until it had been made for six days and that the molder working on the job should be consulted about the rate to be paid. Where representatives of the union and the Defense Association have been called in to settle price disputes, local unions and employers have not been given the right to veto such settlements. These disputes, obviously, have passed the point where prices can be fixed so as to be thoroughly acceptable to both local parties.

The Molders have advanced several objections to piece work as it has been practiced in American foundries. They have charged that the nervous excitement of piece work causes many physical breakdowns. Secondly, it has been held that piece work encourages "hogging" or "rushing" to such an extent that a year's work is done in six months or some such time, thereby causing unemployment. This view, of course, has been based upon the "lump-of-work" theory. Thirdly, the tendency to "rush" or overwork has been alleged to have a bad effect upon piece prices. Fast work means large earnings; large earnings afford the employer an excuse for reducing piece prices on the ground that they are too high and that the men make more than journeymen in other shops. More speeding up then results, earnings attain something like the old level, and finally another cut is made. Piece work has also been condemned because it has encouraged long hours, because it has allowed foremen opportunity to favor particular molders by giving them the better-paid jobs, and because the piece worker has often been paid only for perfect castings, even though he has been supplied with inferior materials. The union has recognized the balance in favor of piece work and has never failed to realize that its abolition would require revolutionary changes in the stove industry. In the machinery and jobbing branch, however, the union has steadfastly denied the necessity for piece work.

One of the first measures adopted at the convention of 1860 consisted of a recommendation "to the Molders of the

United States" for the "abolishment of all piece work as soon as practicable."¹⁶ In 1866 the convention went beyond mere recommendation and voted that after January 1, 1867, piece work should be abolished in all shops under the jurisdiction of the general union, provided the plan, upon being submitted to a referendum, was approved by a majority of three fourths of the local unions. When the referendum was taken, only some twenty of the local unions voted and these were almost evenly divided upon the issue. After 1870 a new policy was adopted by those who were opposed to piece work. Realizing that it would be difficult to secure a convention or referendum vote in favor of the system's abolition, they proposed that members working by the piece be restricted to a fixed wage limit per day in order to destroy any incentive for "speeding up" and to keep the employer from reducing piece rates on the ground that the men were making too much money.

At every convention during the eighties resolutions were introduced seeking the abolition of piece work or some limit on piece workers' earnings. By this time piece work had begun to make inroads in agricultural, and machinery and jobbing shops, thus making its opponents the more eager for its destruction or curtailment. Some local unions adopted rules fining members who worked by the piece elsewhere than in stove shops. Other local unions applied a "limit law" with success, if we may believe certain reports. The feeling gradually gained ground, however, that the abolition of piece work was impossible. Limitation upon earnings, on the other hand, continued to be viewed more and more as a practicable thing or as an experiment worth trying. Accordingly, in 1886 it was voted that piece-working members should not be allowed thereafter to "make over \$3.50 per day." Penalties for violation of the rule were left in the hands of local unions. The "limit law" naturally proved a dead letter. Consequently, in 1888 the national rule was abolished and local unions were allowed to regulate the

¹⁶ Proceedings, 1860, p. 4.

matter as they saw fit. It continued to be the sense of the convention, however, "that piece work is detrimental to our organization, and should be abolished."¹⁷

In 1892, as noted above, the union and the Defense Association in conference agreed to establish a "general rate of molders' wages . . . for each year without change." All shops belonging to the Association operated on the piece-work plan. The conference arrangement provided for the settlement of piece prices on a basis that prevented reductions by individual members of the Association and adjustments made under it later proved that the wage tendency was to be upward rather than downward. In spite of these considerations, however, objections to piece work continued. At the convention of 1899 a horde of resolutions relating to wage limits and the abolition of piece work were introduced. After considerable discussion the convention voted to submit one of the abolition proposals to a referendum. When the popular vote was canvassed, 12,449 ballots were counted in favor of abolition and 1,048 against it. This result did not directly commit the union to strikes against piece work, but it did set the seal of approval upon an educational campaign looking toward the gradual elimination of piece work. The union understood the situation too well to embark "upon the crazy enterprise of attempting to effect a lightning change in all stove foundries."

In March, 1900, at a conference with representatives of the Defense Association the union asked that the substitution of day work for piece work be considered by the next convention of the Association. Immediate opposition to any change was expressed by the representatives of the Association who declared that day work would cause "a revolution in the stove business," make it impossible to arrive at costs of production, and do injustice to molders physically unable to earn minimum time rates. They also declared that day work was wrong in principle as it would put the efficient man "on a par with the lazy or unskilled work-

¹⁷ Ibid., 1888, pp. 56, 68, 80, 92.

man," and they criticized the union's referendum in that machinery molders, who were not vitally affected by the question at issue, were allowed to participate in the balloting. After spending considerable time in their argument the Association's representatives finally agreed to present the union's resolution to their convention "without in any manner committing themselves regarding the change."¹⁸ This convention, however, refused to endorse the resolution.

The 1902 conference also considered some of the aspects of piece work. It was urged that "stove manufacturers avoid the policy of making up jobs which are so undesirable that, in periods of demand for molders, few can be induced to work on them." Furthermore, it was agreed that "work which is of itself considered poor should be divided up as much as possible, so that no molder should suffer unduly." By means of this plan it was expected that one of the minor objections to piece work would be eliminated. A more important move, however, was embodied in another resolution. While a wage limit had been abolished by the general union in 1888, several local unions still endeavored to enforce some limitation, much to the dislike of the foundrymen. Now the latter asked that all limitation of output be discontinued. "It appeared evident to the representatives of the Molders, however, that some guarantee should be given which would eliminate the belief . . . that large earnings would tend to reduce piece prices; otherwise, the molder would not feel free to put forth his best efforts, fearing that he would endanger his future earnings." This guarantee was secured by the adoption of the following clause in the conference agreement:

Inasmuch as it is conceded by the members of the Stove Founders' National Defense Association that the earnings of a molder should exercise no influence upon the molding price of work, which is set, according to well-established precedent and rule of conference agreements, by comparison with other work of a like kind, the placing of a limit upon the earnings of a molder in the seven hours of molding should be discontinued in shops of members of the Stove Founders' National Defense Association.¹⁹

¹⁸ Iron Molders' Journal, April, 1900, p. 184.

¹⁹ Ibid., April, 1902, p. 204.

At the union's 1902 convention President Fox made special reference to this clause and "the convention thereupon placed itself on record as being opposed to any form of limitation of output in any branch of their craft."²⁰ Within recent years certain union leaders have declared that their organization "does exist in part for the purpose of protecting the molder or coremaker from being driven to follow the 'records' which may be made by a man whose ambition is to put up a day's work which no one else can reach, or to have his wages based on the 'record' made by a 'rusher.'"²¹ This statement, coupled with the complaint of many employers that limitation of output continues to exist, would appear to support the conclusion that while the union is opposed to the limitation of output as a general policy, it finds it necessary under certain conditions to tolerate local limitation in practice.

Mention has already been made of efforts which were put forth during the eighties to exclude piece work from agricultural and machinery and jobbing shops. During the following decade several successful strikes were called either to retain or to secure day work in such foundries. After the agreement with the National Founders' Association was made in 1899, a few local arrangements were entered into with members of the Association which provided for the continuance of piece work where it was already established. In 1904 the Association tried to secure assent to an agreement recognizing the right of foundrymen to introduce the piece or premium systems at prices which would enable molders to earn at least the ordinary day rate paid in the different foundries, no reduction to be made except upon the introduction of improved molding facilities or upon mutual agreement. The union, however, refused to enter into any such arrangement, as it wished to restrict rather than to encourage piece work. Since 1904 the union has been able to maintain day work as the prevailing system

²⁰ Frey and Commons, p. 179.

²¹ International Molders' Journal, November, 1914, p. 896.

in the machinery and jobbing foundries under its control. However, it has been unable to prevent the use of piece prices in foundries where there is considerable specialization on certain lines of castings, and it has consented without much objection to the payment of piece prices for work made on molding machinery.

Time Rates.—According to Professor D. A. McCabe, “in the use of the time standard rate the most important question is as to the grouping of the members for purposes of uniform minimum rating.” As this writer has pointed out:

The line of demarcation between groups subject to different minimum rates has nearly always to do with the kind of work the members are performing, not with the degree of competency shown in doing work of the same kind. In many trades there are two or more separate kinds of work which are recognized as constituting distinct branches or subdivisions of the trade or craft, each in itself the special, and for the most part, exclusive, occupation of those who follow it. Where there are such occupational groups within the membership of a union . . . the general policy is to establish different minimum rates for groups recognized as requiring different grades of skill.²²

In the case of the Molders we find that the problem of wage rates for different groups of members has caused considerable difficulty. It has been a settled policy of the organization not to insist upon the same rates for molders employed at different branches of the trade, such as machinery molders, brass molders, radiator molders, and the like. Until recent years it was also an accepted feature of the trade that coremakers should have a lower rate than molders and that bench molders should be paid less than floor molders. The efforts of the union to eliminate these two “differentials” call for some discussion.

As previously noted, coremakers were first organized in a separate national union. In 1903 this union amalgamated with the Molders. By themselves the coremakers had been rather weak and, consequently, they had not been able to obtain wages equal to those paid molders. The average difference in wages amounted to about fifty cents per day.

²² McCabe, pp. 82-83.

Employers claimed that lower wages for coremakers were justified because their work was not as skilled as that of molders. This contention the union accepted for some time. In 1907, however, it came to the conclusion that the differential ought not to exist and the incoming officers were instructed to eliminate it. This action was taken, partly because it was felt that the coremakers possessed equal skill and partly because the union desired to strengthen the allegiance of coremaker members. By 1910 it was reported that the differential had already been superseded by a flat minimum in many cases. In 1913 important agreements were negotiated with the American Locomotive Company and with forty Philadelphia foundrymen for the abolition of the differential. In the New York district, likewise, a flat minimum was generally obtained. In 1915 there were sixty-seven local unions whose coremaker members received less than molder members. At the close of 1916 an equal wage had been established in thirty-three of these unions. The consolidation of coremakers' local unions with local unions of molders had much to do with the ability of the union to abolish the differential.

The differential between bench and floor molders was based upon the theory that bench work was lighter and less complicated than floor molding. On an average, bench workers were paid twenty-five cents less per day. At the 1899 convention it was voted to make every effort to abolish the differential. "From 1900 to 1904 the propriety of the differential was a prominent subject of discussion in the series of conferences between the Iron Molders and the National Founders' Association. . . . The Molders maintained that the differential never should have existed, as bench work was on the whole worth as much as floor work, especially in machinery and jobbing foundries. . . . They argued, too, that the differential had been granted in only a few cities and would be an innovation in the great majority of places. At a conference held in the following February the Molders produced statistical data to support

this contention.”²³ The union also expressed the fear that recognition of a differential would induce employers to put work on the bench that had formerly been on the floor and declared that this had been done where the differential had been in force.²⁴ At the final conference of 1904 no progress had been made toward a settlement of the issue. Since that time the union has been steadily eliminating the differential. In 1915 the differential obtained in twenty-five local unions; at the close of 1916 it was found in only thirteen.

At its first conference with the union the National Founders' Association proposed the appointment of a committee to collect data about “existing conditions, customs and prices throughout the country; to tabulate the same, and from the facts thus gathered to prepare a schedule of wages they would recommend to be adopted by the two associations, the same to be graded and arranged, as in their judgment will best protect the interests of all parties.” This plan, which was preliminary to classifying molders on a basis of competency, the union conferees rejected. They asked, in turn, that the foundrymen recognize “the principle of a minimum wage,” it being understood that in settling the wage rate due consideration should be given “to the diversified nature of the work which would be affected by its application.”²⁵ To this, however, the employers would not agree. It was the opinion of the union that the grading of molders on any other basis than that of trade branches would prove impracticable, except perhaps, in certain specialty shops. “The lines of demarcation would be difficult to fix, and work and wages would tend to gravitate to the lowest grades. as had been the case where there was a difference between bench and floor rates.”²⁶ Another argument advanced later on was that plain work should not be classified for lower rates because a greater output was required on it

²³ Ibid., pp. 91-92.

²⁴ In 1902 a Detroit concern made bench work of flasks that required two men to handle.

²⁵ Iron Molders' Journal, July, 1899, p. 349.

²⁶ McCabe, p. 93.

than on work requiring more skill. It was also maintained that there was not a sufficient amount of plain work to justify a general lower rate. At the conference of October, 1902, the union representatives admitted that some concession might be made for plain work in a few foundries, but they expressed a preference for dealing with each case on its own merits. The union steadily opposed all general schemes for classifying any one type of molders in the same foundry although, as noted previously, it had no objection to classifying different kinds of foundries.

The proposals for classification made by the Founders' Association during the years of negotiation over the question were not always the same. At times a lower rate was suggested for coarse or plain work and at other times a lower rate for less skilled men was requested. In 1902 the Founders requested that the wage rates paid in small cities and towns should be at least twenty-five cents less than those paid in large cities on account of differences in the cost of living. In 1903 they proposed that if a basic wage rate were established in foundries under its jurisdiction, its members should be allowed to enforce a differential of ten per cent that might be extended to as many as forty per cent of their molders, both floor and bench. Throughout the conferences the union manifested a determination to accept no proposal that would in any way undermine its policy of maintaining one standard rate for each branch of the trade. It offered no objection if the employer wished to pay exceptional mechanics more than this rate. Neither did it oppose the employer's right to discharge molders unable to earn the rate. The union balked at classification such as the Founders proposed, chiefly because it felt that the way would be opened for the serious competition among the classes.²⁷

"It has long been the practice among the Iron Molders,"

²⁷ The Molders have always allowed aged members to work for less than the regular minimum. Since 1904 it has also permitted members who have just passed their period of apprenticeship to be paid a lower rate than ordinary journeymen for a period not to exceed six months.

says Professor McCabe, "to observe a 'set day's work.' Originally, a 'set' was the number of castings which a man was expected by the employer to do. The workman later began in many localities to adopt 'sets' for themselves, and the amount of work which was to be regarded as a 'set' came finally to be the subject of agreement between the employer and the shop committee." Only castings which were made in considerable number, such as car wheels, had an established "set." The average daily output of the man who made a casting first was ordinarily recognized as the basis of calculation by the shop committee.²⁸ Fines were sometimes imposed upon molders who exceeded the established rate of output. "Sets" were justified by union members on the ground that they afforded protection against "rushing." Foundrymen naturally complained about the restriction of production involved in a "set." In 1901 the matter was thrashed out in the settlement of the big Cleveland strike. In the agreement which was adopted Section 7 read as follows:

The arbitrary limitation of output on the part of the molders, or arbitrary demands for an increase in the output of the molder on the part of the foundrymen, not being in accord with the spirit of equity which should govern the relationship of employer and employee, all attempts in that direction are to be viewed with disfavor.²⁹

At the 1902, 1903 and 1904 joint conferences the Founders' Association proposed that there should be no set day's work except by mutual agreement, that there should be no restriction of output, and that no fines should be placed upon molders to retard them in their work. The union agreed that arbitrary limitations to output should be stopped and that members should do a "fair and reasonable day's work," but it asked that "pace-makers" be discontinued and that it should not be considered a matter of limitation if journeymen refused to duplicate the output of specially paid "rushers." It also suggested that disputes over what was to be a day's work should be taken up by foundry

²⁸ McCabe, p. 110.

²⁹ Iron Molders' Journal, March, 1901, p. 134.

foremen and their shop committees, with an appeal to national representatives where a local agreement could not be arranged. Since the Association asked that union members give up all restraining influences over output while the union held that "some little measure of restraint" was justifiable, the parties were not able to reach a satisfactory understanding at any of the three conferences.⁸⁰ Since 1904 several authorized strikes have been called against "increasing the day's work" in order to prevent injury to the physical welfare of union members and to check "rushing."

The Molders have never been friendly to "premium" or "bonus" plans for wage payment. "As early as 1887 there was objection on the part of the union to the 'day and a dollar,' or 'day and a quarter' or 'day and a half' system of payment, under which a man or group of men who reduced by a specified amount the average time for turning out a specified amount of product received a dollar or a fraction of a day's wage addition to the regular daily rate."⁸¹ From about 1903 onward there was considerable adverse criticism on the premium plans that were being introduced into some of the larger shops on the ground that molders who worked under these plans did not receive full wages for any extra work beyond a day's set output. The employer's right to share in the gains of increased output was not recognized. At the convention of 1907 the union had voted that inasmuch as the premium system was a special disadvantage to older molders, on account of the "standard time" being set to fit the speed of able-bodied mechanics, the officers of the organization were to use their efforts to check its growth. Consequently the executive board decided that strikes should be authorized wherever, under the premium plan, molders were discharged for refusing to do more than a "day's work," to work under "humiliating conditions," or to work with someone standing over them with a stop watch. Several strikes have been called against premium work, including one at the Water-

⁸⁰ Ibid., November, 1902, p. 941; May, 1903, p. 348.

⁸¹ McCabe, pp. 111-112.

town U. S. Arsenal in 1911. Partly as a result of this strike Congress appointed a special committee to investigate the "Taylor system" as employed in government shops.³²

Disparities in wages in different shops have existed in the machinery and jobbing trade from the very first and in many cases they were quite marked. The movement to equalize day wages naturally began with attempts to secure uniformity within a certain town or district of limited size. In 1867 Newark molders struck to get the same wages that were being paid in New York, Jersey City, and Paterson. During the '70's the small local unions in the Ohio Valley succeeded in getting both day and piece wages based upon those paid in Cincinnati. While the New York agreement was in force, it was the policy of the union, "bearing in mind the close competition existing between foundrymen in the same and adjacent districts," to favor gradual wage increases in low wage districts, rather than to secure increases for the better paid districts. As a result, wage variations of as much as fifty or seventy-five per cent were "largely eliminated."³³ It has frequently been proposed, but without success, that a uniform time wage be adopted for the entire country. Within recent years considerable progress has been made toward wage equalization by means of agreements with large corporations which employ molders in different quarters of the country. In 1912 seven local unions were covered by an agreement with the American Locomotive Company. Flat minima have also been established with district associations of foundrymen. For example, in 1913 an agreement for a minimum rate was signed with the Nebraska Foundrymen's Association. In 1917 a fixed rate was established for "day-work 'molders" in shops controlled by the Stove Founders' Defense Association. In 1918 the rate was increased and was also made applicable to coremakers.

³² Mr. John P. Frey, editor of the Molders' Journal, served as an investigator for the U. S. Commission on Industrial Relations in making a study of efficiency systems. In his report Mr. Frey vigorously assailed these schemes because they placed too much emphasis on profits and too little upon the welfare of labor.

³³ Proceedings, 1907, p. 6.

CHAPTER XI

THE HOURS OF LABOR

Chaos prevailed in the molding trade before the days of unionism so far as the hours of labor were concerned. The early blast furnaces and foundries frequently had no fixed time for pouring off. The molds were prepared, the blast was put on, and then the workmen went home to await summons by a call-boy whenever sufficient iron had been heated. Often the call would come in the middle of the night. Such conditions were due in large part to imperfect cupola construction. The early introduction of piece work and of the helper or "berkshire" system into the stove industry also tended to increase the hours of labor. Indeed, it was not "uncommon for molders to start work at four o'clock in the morning, . . . and the spectacle of a molder trudging through the streets at that hour with his 'berkshire' at his side bearing a lantern was not an unusual one to the night watch of those days."¹ In the machinery and jobbing shops the payment of day wages and the absence of the helper made conditions somewhat better.

Little can be learned of the attitude taken by the early molders' unions toward the workday. In 1835 it was reported at the convention of the National Trades' Union that the ten-hour system had been established by the "Founders" at Albany, Troy, and Schenectady.² If any other local unions prior to 1859 made efforts to regulate the hours of labor, they probably went no further than trying to establish a ten-hour day. In 1861 the question of hours first came before the International Union. A committee which was appointed by the convention to report

¹ D. W. O'Connor, in the *Albany Argus*, March 15, 1896.

² Commons and Sumner, *Documentary History of American Industrial Society*, vol. vi, pp. 253-254. Reprinted from *The National Trades' Union*, October 10, 1835, pp. 2-3.

"some plan by which agitation for the eight-hour system may be brought about," with additional instructions to devise "some plan whereby the ten-hour system may be carried into effect," reported that many molders favored the "universal adoption" of eight hours because they believed it would "tend to the amelioration, enlightenment and education of the laboring class." Since reforms could only be "brought about by agitation," it was recommended, and subsequently adopted, that local unions be urged "to enforce the existing laws governing the hours of labor in their respective localities." Secondly, it was provided that a committee "be appointed to prepare and to publish an address to the People of the United States and Canada upon the subject of reducing the hours of labor to eight *per diem*."³ In brief, the union took the ten-hour day as its immediate goal while it looked toward the ultimate adoption of eight hours. Its expression in favor of the eight-hour system was in all likelihood the first ever made by any American international union.

In 1864 President Sylvis expressed the opinion that an extensive educational campaign should occupy first place in any program for a reduction in the working day. The convention of that year accordingly marked time and merely called the attention of local unions to "the propriety of not going to work previous to six o'clock in the morning."⁴ In the following year President Sylvis proposed that the time of going to work be fixed at seven o'clock in the morning, an hour that had "become the custom in many places and should be universal." Such a rule, he said, would be "the first step toward the ultimate establishment of the eight-hour system and the abolition of piece work."⁵ The convention, however, did not act favorably on the suggestion until 1872, when it was shown that many "piece unions" were already enforcing a "seven o'clock law" with good results. As interpreted by President Saffin, the new rule

³ Proceedings, 1861, pp. 19, 21, 23.

⁴ Ibid., 1864, pp. 22, 24.

⁵ Ibid., 1865, p. 13.

applied only to piece-work shops and meant that no union piece worker was to be permitted "to work at molding before the regular hour when all other mechanics and laborers go to work in and about the establishment in which such member is employed."⁶ Before long considerable fault was found because the rule set no limit upon the number of hours to be worked either by day or piece molders, but only fixed the time when work might begin. In addition, it was discovered that piece workers insisted on brushing patterns, cutting, parting and riddling sand, and getting facing prior to seven o'clock on the plea that such work did not constitute molding.⁷ In other cases, where the molder was not allowed by his local union to do this work himself, he hired someone to do it for him. This practice proved so difficult to stop that in time the union was compelled to recognize its legitimacy. As the rules now read, no "member" whether a day worker or a piece worker, is allowed to do any work before seven a.m. or after six p.m. unless foundry time schedules distribute the working hours for all employees otherwise.

The first important campaign aimed directly at shorter hours in both day-work and piece-work shops began in 1867. In that year several local unions joined other trades in strikes for eight hours contrary to the desire of President Sylvis who firmly believed that a shorter day could only be obtained through "agitation, education and legislation." This movement accomplished very little, as may be judged by the fact that when the 1876 convention adopted the first rule definitely limiting the hours of labor, it was provided that ten hours should be recognized as "a legal day's work." The hours must be between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., with overtime "in the same ratio as for all other

⁶ Ibid., 1874, p. 22

⁷ "Hours of labor are unknown in some sections in the State of New York; the blowing of whistles or the sounding of bells at 7 A.M., 12 M. or 1 P.M. has no significance whatever, because of the fact that many a blow has been struck towards the day's labor before such signal is given" (James E. Roach, president of Local Union No. 8, in *Every Saturday*, Albany, December 5, 1893).

mechanics" in the immediate vicinity. An amendment to adopt eight hours in place of ten was lost after considerable debate. Two years later, however, subordinate unions were urged "to use all their abilities" in advancing the eight-hour day in their localities.⁸

In 1885 the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions issued a call to all affiliated organizations for a general eight-hour strike on May 1, 1886. While many molders felt that their union should assist in carrying out the proposed movement, no active part was taken by it. The president and executive board believed "that the working people were not fully educated up to the movement and that it would be impossible to make it a success." This view was supported by the convention of 1886 which provided that "the eight-hour movement be left in the hands of the incoming officers until such time as they deem it advisable and then submit it to the popular vote of the members."⁹ Before any referendum was taken, however, a new national workday was adopted. As early as 1872 a few unions in Canada had endeavored to secure a nine-hour day and in 1887 nine hours was actually obtained by several local unions on the Pacific Coast. Delegates from the latter group in 1888 secured the adoption of a resolution to make nine hours a "day's work" on and after April 1, 1889. No active measures, however, were undertaken to enforce the rule and it became a dead letter.

In 1890 the American Federation of Labor fixed May 1 as the date for a second great movement for the reduction of hours. The Molders were urged to join in the demonstration, but the executive board again decided that participation would be inadvisable. In 1895 President Fox stated to the convention that ten hours was "supposed to be the rule, but in many foundries little if any attention is paid even to this." He asked that a regular workday be determined in order to compel employers to start their heats

⁸ Proceedings, 1876, p. 77; 1878, p. 53.

⁹ Ibid., 1886, pp. 9, 34.

promptly or pay overtime. Since the nine-hour rule was unenforceable a ten-hour day with time-and-one-half for overtime was adopted. Provision was also made for a "Shorter-Work-Day Fund" to be raised by a direct tax not to exceed five cents per month on each member and the convention went on record as favoring the ultimate adoption of an eight-hour day.¹⁰

After sharp editorial prodding from the Iron Molders' Journal which compared the union to Rip Van Winkle because of its lethargy it was decided in 1899 to take a referendum on the adoption of an eight-hour day. This measure was passed after a sharp fight in favor of nine hours which had recently been established by the machinery molders of Pittsburgh. The referendum showed a vote of 12,367 in favor of the proposal to 796 against it. Although an overwhelming majority was rolled up for an eight-hour day, for some time local unions entered into no active campaign for it. They watched with interest the fight being made by the Machinists to enforce a nine-hour agreement with the National Metal Trades' Association, but they continued to make demands for higher wages rather than for shorter hours, although it was pointed out that the shorter day, once established, was more easily retained than increased wages.

Incited by the Printers' and the Machinists' policy of reducing the workday "an hour at a time," the Molders' officers decided at last to advocate "nine hours as a stepping stone to eight." On April 23 1900, the executive board, after receiving the referendum vote in favor of the eight-hour day, decided that a general strike to obtain the latter would be unwise since the certain failure of the movement in many localities would retard progress. Local strikes for nine hours, however, were approved and during the next year several unions were given assistance in forcing reductions to nine hours. In 1901 a nine-hour day was secured in several towns near Pittsburgh, in the jobbing found-

¹⁰ Ibid., 1895, pp. 20, 56, 57, 64, 66, 69, 72, 90.

ries of Boston and vicinity, and finally in the foundries under the jurisdiction of the New York Conference Board. Strikes for nine hours were also inaugurated in San Francisco, Seattle, and Tacoma. Encouraged by these successes, the Molders in 1902 pronounced themselves in favor of the nine-hour day in all foundries under their jurisdiction. Furthermore, it was provided that all well-organized unions were to give preference to demands for a nine-hour day without reduction in wages, while the incoming officers were instructed to negotiate local and national agreements to the same end when possible.¹¹

Following this action the first extensive movement for a shorter workday may be said to have taken place. The machinery and jobbing branches of the trade, where time rates prevailed, were the first to secure results. When local unions found that they could not get the sanction of the executive board to strike for higher wages, they fell in line for shorter hours. Their demands were soon granted in many foundry centers of New England, Pennsylvania, New York, and the Central West. By March, 1903, it was reported that 7,500 molders in day-work shops, largely machinery and jobbing foundries, had so far obtained nine hours, either by recent agreement or by "established custom." Of this number about 4,300 were in the New York and Pittsburgh districts. In December, 1903, it was stated that the number of nine-hour shops had increased during the year by over two hundred per cent.

In 1902 two conferences were held with the National Founders' Association. At the first the molders asked for a shorter day on the ground that labor-saving machinery made it possible from the employer's viewpoint and that increased effort and concentration made it necessary from the workman's viewpoint. The foundrymen, however, declared that shorter hours would mean less product and would, therefore, be impracticable at the time because of

¹¹ Ibid., 1902, p. 724. In all, six resolutions to reduce the working day were presented at the 1902 convention.

the extraordinary demand for castings. They agreed, however, to bring the matter to the attention of their administrative council at its next meeting. In the meantime, it was provided that whenever the nine-hour day became an issue, it was to be dealt with under the New York Agreement. At the second conference the union proposed a nine-hour day with ten hours' pay in return for which it promised to cooperate with the foundrymen "in using to their best advantage all improved facilities or methods introduced with a view to reducing the labor cost." By this time, however, the Founders had framed an agreement covering various foundry issues which they wished the union to accept in full. Their conferees accordingly refused to accept a nine-hour day unless the Molders subscribed to all provisions of the proposed agreement. The Molders, however, considered nearly all these provisions extremely obnoxious and refused to accept them. Consequently, as the representatives of the Founders refrained from considering a nine-hour day "upon its merits alone" and continued to deal with the question as a "subject of barter," no settlement was reached.¹² The position of the foundrymen shifted the following month at their sixth annual convention when it was unanimously agreed that the establishment of a nine-hour day was a local and not a national issue. Accordingly, at the final conference held in April, 1904, representatives of the Association declared that they would not accept a proposition for a nine-hour day, it offered. After this conference all movements for shorter hours in machinery and jobbing foundries necessarily involved individual employers only.

During the next few years there was a steady increase in the number of nine-hour unions. In 1907 President Valentine stated that seventy-five per cent of the membership in the machinery and jobbing branch, employed for the most part in large foundry centers, had a nine-hour day. In 1912 the per cent so working had increased to

¹² Conference Proceedings, MS., October, 1902.

ninety-five. In some cases, notably in all the towns of Montana, eight hours had been secured. The union, however, continued to devote its energies toward getting nine hours for all the unions. So successful were its efforts that by the end of 1910 few ten-hour cities were left. Finally, in 1912, the time was considered ripe for a further advance. It was then decided to declare for an eight-hour day and to require all well-organized unions to give preference to it in demands upon employers as had previously been done in 1902 with respect to a nine-hour day. Furthermore, all efforts were to be bent toward securing reductions by local and national agreements. Up to the present time this movement has had good success. At the close of 1916 the following gains for machinery and jobbing unions were recorded over the hours in 1915:¹⁸

Number of Local Unions	Hours for 1915	Hours for 1916
2.....	10 per day	9½ per day
26.....	10 per day	9 per day
14.....	9 per day	8 per day
1.....	54 per week	50 per week

The first rule adopted primarily to regulate the hours of piece workers was the so-called "seven-o'clock law." Soon after its passage agitation developed in favor of stating specifically the time to be allowed for actual molding. In certain quarters it was advocated that no molding be done after the dinner hour, and in others that the hours be limited to seven, seven and one half, or eight per day. Piece workers, of course, were affected by the general decisions in favor of eight-hour or nine-hour days, but it proved difficult to keep them within bounds because they would generally continue molding so late in the afternoon that more flasks were put up than could be poured off within the stipulated time. When conferences with the Defense Association were begun in 1891, the question of hours, like other matters pertaining to the trade, was submitted to national collective bargaining. In 1902 an agreement was finally reached with the Association for a molding day of seven

¹⁸ International Molders' Journal, December, 1916, pp. 1047-1050.

hours. All unskilled labor, such as cutting sand and work of like character, was to be done by ordinary laborers. At the conference of December, 1910, it was further agreed that after April, 1911, the last ladle of iron should be given to the molder within an hour and three quarters after the seven hours of molding. Time given to sand-cutting was not to be included within the molding period. In 1913 the union asked that the hours of molding be reduced to six. The foundrymen contended that they had "had but two years in which to adjust themselves to the eight and three quarters hours rule and they should not now be called upon in so short a period to make another and still more radical change."¹⁴ In December, 1916, a compromise was reached on a molding day of six and one half hours. Finally, it was agreed in 1918 that the last ladle of iron was to be given the molder within one and three quarters hours after six hours of molding.

Overtime has always been an important factor in the molding industry owing to numerous accidents and unforeseen delays that are bound to occur in preparing or handling a heat. It has frequently been complained that for this reason the hours of molders are more irregular than those of other workers. The international officers have always tried to discourage overtime because it "takes work away from the unemployed," and because tired men cannot be expected to do good work. As noted above, in 1876 a rule was adopted for payment of overtime "in the same ratio as other mechanics" in the "immediate vicinity." In 1895 it was provided definitely that time-and-one-half should be paid for overtime, with double time for Sunday and holidays. This rule, of course, involved an increase in piece prices as well as an addition to day rates. Very frequently piece workers have encroached upon the dinner hour. In 1895 it was provided that no union molder should "do any work between the hours of 12 m. and 1 p.m., if practicable."¹⁵ This is the present rule.

¹⁴ Ibid., January, 1911, p. 1; January, 1914, pp. 30, 50.

¹⁵ Constitution, 1895, Standing Resolution No. 3.

Agitation for a Saturday half holiday began to appear in the early eighties. Attention was called to the fact that such an arrangement had been enjoyed for some time by English and Scotch molders who considered it an "inestimable boon." During the nineties a few local unions secured Saturday afternoons off, especially during the summer months. In general, however, there has been little interest among the molders in the half-holiday plan, due to the feeling that the efforts of the organization can be spent to better advantage by the promotion of the shorter workday. In 1886 it was proposed that the Molders imitate the glass workers' union by shutting down all stove shops from July 1 to September 1 each year. In 1907 the convention referred to the conference committee a resolution requesting the Defense Association to agree to a shut-down of one month during the hot summer weather. The committee, however, never took the matter up with the foundrymen. The summer-stop issue has never been pressed because other limitations on working time have been of more importance.

In advocating the shorter workday the Molders have advanced two doctrines at different times: first, that shorter hours realize a lessened product per man, thereby increasing the demand for journeymen; second, that they realize a product equivalent to, or greater than, that which can be obtained by longer hours. President Saffin was one of the first to give expression to the former doctrine, which has been called the "lump-of-labor" theory. In 1874 he advocated an eight-hour day "in the hope that there will be a corresponding reduction in the amount produced by each individually . . . until the demand for laborers equals the supply."¹⁶ In 1885 the prevailing philosophy was more fully stated as follows: "It is not proper that some should be compelled to go in idleness. To diminish the hours of toil is to increase the value of labor. It will be the means of giving employment to unemployed labor. It will change

¹⁶ International Journal, May, 1874, p. 361.

for the better the social state and character of the people. It will also strengthen the faith of the people in the political institutions of the country."¹⁷ The well-known physical and educational arguments in favor of shorter hours were also stated. A little later it was said that shorter hours were "one of the important factors that will assist to solve the problem of what to do with the surplus of labor which the active American genius . . . is constantly throwing into idleness."¹⁸ Irregular employment, underemployment and unemployment, with their accompaniment of tramp molders, scabs, non-union men, suspended and expelled union members, were all attributed to long hours.

By 1897 it became evident that a new theory of the shorter workday had to be adopted. An endeavor was then being made to interest employers' associations in a reduction of the working time. Such bodies could not be reached by the doctrine that shorter hours meant less product and the employment of more men at prevailing wages. In an address before the American Foundrymen's Association in May, 1897, President Fox rather inconsistently stated that the eight-hour day would reduce the army of unemployed and that at the same time it was the best system "from a business standpoint" because it might result in production equal to that of the ten-hour day. In the course of the next few years the "increased-productivity" theory became firmly established. It was reported that the nine-hour shops were the best money makers since they got the best molders and turned out the best castings. As a final statement of its faith in reduced hours, the union in 1907 declared that the shorter workday brought increased financial gain to employers through increased production and that it meant for employees better health, more time at home with wives and children, and opportunity for self-improvement.¹⁹

¹⁷ *Iron Molders' Journal*, January, 1885, p. 12.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, August, 1887, p. 4.

¹⁹ *Proceedings*, 1907, p. 130.

CHAPTER XII

APPRENTICES AND HELPERS

Apprentices.—As soon as American molders organized they endeavored to secure regularity with regard to the ratio, term, age, instruction, and pay of apprentices. Particular attention was paid to the ratio. Usually this question was taken up later than that of wages but in some cases it antedated the wage issue. The Molders have had two purposes in restricting the number of apprentices. In the first place, they have sought to prevent the 'overcrowding' of the trade; secondly, they have wished to give apprentices an opportunity to learn the trade.

As far as can be learned, the usual ratio observed by the early local unions was one apprentice to ten journeymen. In the Philadelphia union extra allowance was made for "sons of molders working with their fathers."¹ When the general union was formed, local unions were still left free "to regulate the apprentice system as they may deem expedient," although they were urged to adopt some means of securing a regularly articulated apprenticeship.² Finally, the 1867 convention established a uniform ratio of one apprentice to each shop regardless of its size, and, in addition, one apprentice to each eight journeymen therein. When it came to enforcing the ratio the union found grave difficulty. Employers complained that the limit of one to eight prevented a proper recruiting of the trade and that it was a purely arbitrary, rule-of-thumb regulation. In many localities the apprenticeship issue caused severe strikes and lockouts.

Largely as a result of the criticism which was directed against the limitations of a fixed ratio, the Molders endorsed

¹ Iron Molders' Journal, April, 1881, p. 4.

² Proceedings, 1860, p. 4; Constitution, 1860, By-Laws, art. 5, sec. 4.

a system of indenture in 1876 after unsuccessful attempts had been made to secure the establishment of such a system through state legislation. The several local unions were instructed "to use every honorable means to have each and every apprentice to the trade of iron molding legally indentured" for at least four years. By a legal indenture was meant a contract between the employer and the parent or guardian of the boy whereby the former agreed to teach the boy his trade, furnish him work each working day in the year, pay him a stated wage, furnish him proper care during sickness, and be responsible before the proper courts. The apprentice was to agree to be "honest, sober and attentive," to work each working day, to advance his master's interest, and to "use diligence in learning the trade" during a maximum ten-hour day. Either party was to have power to break the indenture for sufficient cause as determined in court. Indentures were to be recorded with competent county officials. Whenever the employer refused "to have his apprentices indentured or to serve four years," each local union was "to do all in its power to restrict the employment of such apprentices" to the one-to-eight ratio. If the employer agreed to the plan, no specific ratio was to be enforced.³ The passage of the indenture plan was hailed by President Saffin as something which should "disarm all opposition" to the union's apprenticeship policy since the doors of the trade were thrown open to all aspirants, provided employers agreed to become legally responsible for apprentices. The ideal system, however, did not work. Neither employers nor apprentices were anxious to take advantage of it. The age of indenture had long since passed. After a half dozen years' trial had proved the futility of the plan, it was completely dropped, and uniform enforcement of the old ratio was again attempted.⁴

Scientific discussion of the apprenticeship ratio first began

³ Proceedings, 1876, p. 65.

⁴ Ibid., 1882, p. 78. On several occasions after 1882 a second trial of the indenture system was unsuccessfully proposed.

with the annual conferences between the union and the Stove Founders' National Defense Association. At the first conference in 1891 it was unanimously decided to investigate the question. At the second conference in 1892 a resolution was recommended for favorable action to the membership of both associations which provided that "as reliable statistics demonstrate the average duration of a journeyman molder's continuance at his trade to be less than sixteen years, it is necessary, in order to maintain a proper supply of competent workmen, that one apprentice be employed for every six journeymen or one for every seven floors operated."⁵ Since this provision practically meant the full recognition of a regular apprenticeship ratio by the foundrymen, a majority of the latter opposed its adoption. Likewise the union, by referendum vote, refused to sanction the change in the ratio.

After 1892 "the foundrymen annually lodged complaint against the restriction. They gave no official sanction to the Molders' ratio, and held that each member of the Association was free to employ as large a number of apprentices as in his estimation were required."⁶ No strikes occurred over this question in Association foundries, but the Molders locally used their efforts to maintain the ratio at one to eight. At the various conferences the foundrymen emphasized the fact that the average ratio actually obtaining in the stove shops of the country was much higher than eight to one and they repeatedly asked for the establishment of a ratio of four to one. The officers of the union made investigations which, to a great extent, substantiated the employers' claims. They discovered that during strikes many boys had been introduced into foundries and that the trade was being recruited in a very irregular and undesirable way. Consequently they urged upon their membership the advisability of raising the ratio as a means of meeting an existing situation. President Fox, in particular, ex-

⁵ Iron Molders' Journal, March, 1892, p. 5.

⁶ Frey and Commons, p. 165.

pressed the opinion that if the ratio were increased the union would not be charged with arbitrary determination and that it would have better control over entry to the trade. He pointed out that the "botch" workmen, who were produced by the employment of a large number of boys in struck shops and in non-union shops, were detrimental to the union and that it was unjust to fair employers to penalize them with a low ratio.

In spite of the arguments presented to them the members of the union refused for many years to make any change. Finding that a campaign of education was needed, the officers of the union entered upon it with vigor. Meanwhile the Association patiently waited for results. The 1904 conference proved to be the beginning of the end. The union representatives definitely favored a ratio of one to five, provided it were observed by every member of the Defense Association, and promised another referendum on the question. Soon after the conference a meeting of all the international officers and business agents of the union expressed unanimous approval of the ratio of one to five. By constant presentation of argument the officers were finally able to win over enough of the membership to carry the referendum by the close vote of 11,308 to 9,028.

The favorable vote did not mean amendment of the Molders' constitution. It merely authorized the union's conferees to enter into an agreement with the Association establishing a ratio of one apprentice to every five journeymen, plus one apprentice for each shop. Such an agreement was made in March, 1905. Following a plan adopted in 1900, the agreement also provided that foundrymen might obtain more apprentices than the ratio allowed when journeymen molders were not available in sufficient numbers. To secure a gradual adjustment to the new plan, it was agreed that "the number of apprentices shall be computed upon the journeymen molders, it being understood that when the force of molders is increased, said increase

shall have been in existence not less than eight weeks previous to the employment of additional apprentices." Where shops were observing a ratio higher than one to five, the latter ratio was to be reached "by refraining from placing new apprentices at work, until such time as the present number of apprentices will have been reduced to the proper number." In shops where the existing ratio was less than one to five no journeyman was to "be discharged or laid off for the purpose of supplanting him by an additional apprentice."⁷ All these conference resolutions were adopted by the Defense Association in May, 1905, and were put into effect on June 1 of the same year.

Quite different in result were the negotiations with the National Founders' Association. At the conference of October, 1902, representatives of the Founders complained that there were not enough skilled machinery and jobbing molders and that restrictive apprenticeship rules were ill-advised. They asked that the officers of the Association and the union be allowed to adjust disputes over the proper number of apprentices "in an equitable way, based upon the conditions prevailing at the time in the locality in which the dispute occurs." To this measure the Molders' conferees refused assent.⁸ A similar resolution was defeated in 1904. The objections raised to the plan were that it practically amounted to the abolition of the ratio, that it involved too much uncertainty and would open up the way, in some cases, for using more boys than molders. When the Founders' Association abrogated the New York agreement later in 1904, all negotiations over apprentices necessarily were dropped.

In 1907 the union established the ratio of one to five for all shops as it was inequitable to burden friendly employers outside the stove branch with a lower ratio than stove foundrymen enjoyed. The Defense Association in 1912 and 1916 unsuccessfully asked for a ratio of one to three.

⁷ Iron Molders' Journal, April, 1905, p. 250.

⁸ Ibid., November, 1902, p. 941.

In 1912 various resolutions were offered in the union convention for the restoration of the old general ratio of one to eight and for a special ratio of one to twenty on molding-machine work. None of these measures were approved.

It was shown in 1912 that in some shops there was a tendency to put all or a very large part of the apprentices either in the coreroom or on the foundry floor. To prevent overcrowding any one branch of the trade it was voted that local unions "use their best endeavor to effect an equal distribution of apprentices in all branches of the molding trade."⁹ While the quota of boys was distinctly stated in the apprenticeship rules, for a long time no method was provided for ascertaining the number of molders upon which the ratio was to be based. The matter was complicated by the fact that foundries did not provide continuous employment the year round for "nearly an equal number of molders." It was claimed that the foundrymen were "taking advantage of the law and putting on as many apprentices as they would be entitled to have if all the floors and benches were full."¹⁰ To correct this abuse the convention of 1886 provided that the ratio was to be "based upon the number of men employed in a shop the preceding year."¹¹ In 1890, for some unexplained reason, this rule was rescinded. Finally, in 1912, a rule was adopted that "the number of apprentices shall be computed by the number of journeymen employed, it being understood that when the number of journeymen is increased, said increase shall have been in existence not less than eight weeks previous to the employment of any additional apprentices."¹²

According to accounts given by veteran molders the term of apprenticeship in pre-union days varied constantly. One boy in 1805 was apprenticed to a journeyman with whom he served but two years. Still another molder relates that in

⁹ Proceedings, 1912, pp. 134, 244.

¹⁰ Iron Molders' Journal, January, 1886, p. 3.

¹¹ Proceedings, 1886, pp. 51, 57.

¹² Constitution, 1912, art. 9, sec. 1.

1848 he was apprenticed to the trade for six years and thirteen days. With the formation of local unions, a term of four years, then more or less customary in all trades, became the rule. This term was adopted by the general union in 1859 and it has since remained standard. On several occasions unsuccessful attempts have been made to shorten the term. Curtailment of the term has been opposed because the union believes four years to be requisite for mastering the trade and because a shorter period of service would result, like a higher ratio, in turning out too many journeymen.

In the early days of the American molding industry boys were often apprenticed to the trade while still mere children. It was not uncommon in some sections for boys to begin service when only eleven and twelve years old. Boys of a more advanced age, however, were usually preferred. In 1867 the International Union provided that no boy should begin the trade before the age of sixteen, a rule which has been retained down to date. A maximum age for apprentices was also maintained for a few years. In 1870 it was voted to "admit no boy to the trade" after he was twenty years old. In 1882 twenty-one years was made the upper limit for the beginning of an apprenticeship. In 1895 this rule was rescinded and since that time no maximum has been imposed. The object of a maximum limit was to exclude from the trade men considered too old ever to become good mechanics. Within recent years molding machinery has resulted in bringing into foundries many apprentices well advanced in years.

In 1870 President Saffin urged upon all union members the duty of seeing that every apprentice became a good journeyman, although there was at the time "no specific law on the question." A capable journeyman, he said, made a better member, tended less to become a fixture in one shop, and did not fear to look elsewhere for a living. In 1874 it was provided for the first time that apprentices were

not to serve their whole time on "any one piece, pattern or job" but were to be taught all the different work made in the branch at which they were engaged. The indenture system of 1876 was expected to do big things by way of giving boys complete trade knowledge because it made the employer responsible for giving his apprentices thorough instruction. Union members were also required "to assist every legally indentured apprentice in securing a full knowledge of the trade" and to discourage their steady employment on "any pattern, job or piece." When the indenture system proved a failure, the union was compelled to fall back upon its own resources to secure proper apprenticeship training.

In 1892 it was the sense of the annual conference with the Defense Association that "apprentices should be given every opportunity to learn all the details of the trade thoroughly" and that "each apprentice in the last year of his apprenticeship should be given a floor between two journeymen molders," who, "with the foreman, should pay special attention to his mechanical education in all classes of work."¹³ The 1903 conference further recommended that as the apprentice's skill improved he should be put on better grades of work and that in his fourth year he should be given some of the very best work on a floor between two journeymen. These provisions remain in force at present. To cover shops not reached by the agreement the union provided in 1902 that each member use his influence to have every recorded apprentice given an opportunity on all kinds of work.

In order to help apprentices acquire a general knowledge of the trade it was provided in 1899 that, "wherever practicable," they should be enabled to take courses in mechanical drawing.¹⁴ Subsequently the Molders in some degree extended their favor to trade schools, although their spokesmen held that such schools would "never be a sub-

¹³ Iron Molders' Journal, March, 1892, p. 5.

¹⁴ Proceedings, 1899, p. 188.

stitute for an intelligent, comprehensive apprenticeship system." In 1912 it was provided that local unions should "endeavor to have apprentices take a course in a technical school, in order to obtain as thorough a knowledge of the trade as possible." This did not mean that the organization was willing to accept technical-school graduates as members, but only that apprentices should be encouraged to supplement their shop work with outside training. In 1899 the Molders condemned the practice of putting an instructor over apprentices. It was declared that the best procedure was to place the boys out through the shop among the journeymen "that they may learn the principles of unionism as well as molding."¹⁵ In spite of all efforts to aid the apprentice in becoming a fully-equipped molder, the editor of the *International Molders' Journal* in 1913 confessed that the use of various devices and business methods which furthered specialization, plus the practical disappearance of the indenture system, still tended to make the apprentice a "one-job man." In truth, he said, the labor of the apprentice was largely "being secured under false pretenses."¹⁶

As far as practicable, the Molders have always insisted that an apprentice serve his term with but a single employer, on the theory that the foundryman who uses the apprentice during his earlier, less productive years should also have his services during his later, more productive years. Again, when an apprentice serves his full time in one shop the union can easily see to it that he fulfills its requirements as to years of service, training, competency and so forth. The Molders have never made it a rule to call apprentices out on strike. The relations between employer and apprentice have to a large extent been looked upon as a personal, not to be interrupted by any action of the journeymen. In addition, to involve apprentices in a strike ordinarily has

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 123, 135.

¹⁶ *International Molders' Journal*, May, 1913, p. 406.

had no marked effect upon the issue of the dispute. In recent years it has been provided that "the president and executive board, when considering the probable number of men who might become involved in a strike, shall include all apprentices employed in the shop, or shops, affected as entitled to financial support."¹⁷ For the term 1912-1917 a total of \$69,363.94 in strike benefits was paid apprentices. To call out apprentices, however, is still the exception and not the rule.

Helpers.—A helper may be defined as a person hired to assist a skilled journeyman under whose supervision he works. He is employed to promote the work of another and he is supervised in his tasks to some extent by the mechanic whom he aids. "On the other hand, an apprentice is one who, by promise, indenture or contract, for a specified time, is taught the trade by a master of the trade or someone in his employ." Helpers are not engaged primarily to learn a trade but rather to supply comparatively unskilled labor. Helpers should also be distinguished from laborers since the latter, though subordinate to other workmen, are in no way responsible to them.

Helpers have been divided by the leading writer on the subject into three classes, remote helpers, helpers proper, and advanced helpers.¹⁸ The first group are little more than laborers since they do not "come into intimate contact with journeymen in the performance of work." In the foundry such persons have been used to cut sand, skim, shake out castings, "stag the ladle," and the like. Helpers proper work along with journeymen and are under their supervision much or all of the time. Such helpers are known as "berkshires" or "bucks."¹⁹ They actually

¹⁷ Constitution, 1912, Standing Resolution No. 15.

¹⁸ J. H. Ashworth, "The Helper and American Trade Unions," in the Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, Series XXXIII, No. 3, pp. 9-12.

¹⁹ The term "berkshire" originated in England where it was derived in some way from the name of the county Berkshire. It was used by English molders many years previous to the develop-

handle patterns and do the less skilled part of preparing molds, such as ramming flasks. Advanced helpers are ordinarily helpers proper "in transition to the status of a full mechanic." In short, they may be called "journeymen on probation." Helpers of this kind have had little or no place in the molding industry, except, perhaps, in some unorganized shops.

Prior to the rise of unions during the fifties it was the custom of the trade for every piece-working journeyman to employ from one to five helpers to assist him in handling flasks, preparing the mold and doing other work of a comparatively unskilled character. These men, or boys, as they often were, received their wages, not from the foundryman but from the molder. The primary result of this system, on its productive side, was to leave the expert craftsman free to perform the difficult and technical parts of his work since the low-grade tasks were left to his helpers. Under ideal conditions, too, the wage of the journeyman was subject to increase through the assistance afforded him by cheaper workmen who performed operations requiring little ability. By having helpers assist in "lifting off" and "closing" large flasks the molder was also saved the necessity of aiding a fellow journeyman on work of that character, thereby saving much valuable time. The helper system saved overhead cost to the employer by enabling a single molder to increase his output to such a degree as to make it unnecessary to provide duplicate patterns.

In spite of certain advantages in the helper system, as operated "from time immemorial," one of the first acts of the early unions was to oppose it. The Philadelphia union in 1855 ordered that no member "be allowed a helper for any other purpose than to Make Cores, Skim and turn out Castings" except by special permission of the organization. Should any molder, whether a union man or not, violate the

ment of unionism in the American trade. Its introduction into this country was doubtless due to the immigrant English journeyman of the early part of the nineteenth century.

rule, it became the duty of members "to refuse to work in the Foundry where such journeyman is employed."²⁰ Provisions much the same were adopted by the Buffalo and Troy unions in 1859. The opposition of the unions was due, in the first place, to the fact that the helper system was a menace to the maintenance of rates. By leaving unskilled work to the helpers a piece worker could greatly increase his earnings. Consequently, each molder became interested in handling all the flasks he could with the aid of perhaps four or five "bucks." This procedure, however, tended to decrease the amount of work open to other journeymen and eventually it resulted in a decline of the piece rate. When the wage dropped, more "bucks" were hired by the anxious molders and thus the evil was aggravated. Secondly, the helper often picked up enough of the trade to qualify for a molder's place in case the latter was absent from work or left the shop. In some instances foundrymen regularly supplanted journeymen with the cheaper helpers as soon as the latter were capable of making one or two patterns. Again, when a helper became disgruntled with the wages paid him by a journeyman, he frequently set up as a molder himself and thus intensified competition within the trade. From the journeyman's point of view, therefore, the helper appeared to menace the wage scales and to threaten a flood of semi-skilled mechanics who had enough specialized capacity to elbow all-around molders out of jobs. His operations also tended to weaken the effectiveness of the apprenticeship system and to endanger the journeymen's "right to the trade."

In opposing the helper system the Molders have directed their efforts towards two ends, (1) "the abolition of the prevailing system of hiring and paying helpers, and (2) the abolition of all helpers proper and the establishment of a definite line between the work of molders and that of remote helpers." These two purposes have been pursued together

²⁰ Journeymen Stove and Hollow-ware Moulders' Union of Philadelphia, Constitution and By-Laws, 1855, art. 6, sec. 5.

although the first has been "deemed necessary to the accomplishment of the second, which was the real consideration."²¹ Accordingly, while the abuses of the employment system have been sharply attacked, the union has had as its ultimate object the retention of the trade primarily for craftsmen who have served an apprenticeship.

Action against helpers was first taken by the general union in 1860. It was then unanimously adopted in convention "that we as a body emphatically discountenance the Helper or Bucksheer system and that it be abolished as soon as practicable."²² Attempts were made by several local unions during the sixties and seventies to prevent the use of helpers, but these efforts were not generally successful. Actual prohibition of the employment of helpers did not come until 1873, when President Saffin decided that no piece worker could work a helper who assisted him in actual molding, whether the helper was paid by himself or by the foundryman. All members, however, were allowed to employ "persons" to "skim, shake out and cut sand, but for no other purposes." It was also decided that "any employer demanding of members that they shall . . . work 'Bucks' . . . shall constitute a lockout."²³ With the approval of these rulings by the 1874 convention the international union specifically sanctioned the employment of helpers for only a few purposes and their payment by the journeymen. Since some kinds of molding involved work too heavy for one man to handle, permission was soon sought to use helpers on jobs of this character as an exception to the general rule. In 1882 President Fitzpatrick yielded to the importunities of piece-working car-wheel molders and allowed them to use helpers paid by the foundrymen. Appeal from this decision was taken by other piece-working members engaged upon large castings on the ground that

²¹ Ashworth, pp. 67-68. The opposition of journeymen molders to the helper system has generally been seconded by apprentices.

²² Proceedings, 1860, p. 9.

²³ Ibid., 1874, pp. 21, 24.

discrimination had been shown, but the ruling was upheld in convention and no further concessions were made.

How persistently the "berkshire" system held on can be seen from the numerous cases of discipline for "running bucks" reported during the nineties by the stronger local unions. However, by constant pounding, the union proved able gradually to overcome the insistence of employers and the greed of individual molders. Finally, in 1899, after the union had almost stopped the payment of helpers proper by journeymen and their employment at molding processes, it felt strong enough to proclaim that members should cease paying for the services of helpers used to skim, cut sand and shake out.

The next step was to approach the Stove Founders' National Defense Association in favor of an agreement whereby helpers, or "berkshires," were to be barred from all association shops. In many such plants foundrymen had already relinquished the employment of helpers and the union felt that a clean sweep could be made provided the Association would urge the remaining concerns to pursue the same course. When the resolution for such a vote was first proposed by President Fox, the Defense Association agreed thereto, provided the union would sanction a higher apprentice ratio than the prevailing ratio of one to eight.²⁴ No agreement was reached, but each group offered to test the sentiment of its membership upon the points involved. When President Fox explained the situation to the 1899 convention, it would have nothing to do with a higher ratio although it instructed the conference committee to get rid of the disliked "bucks." In 1900 the question was again taken up in conference. Once more the Association made a liberalization of the apprentice ratio the price for its agreement to the total prohibition of "bucks." After a "mutual understanding" had been reached in 1902 that the few stove manufacturers still employing "bucks"

²⁴ Iron Molders' Journal, April, 1899, p. 162.

should discontinue the practice, the matter was completely settled in 1904, when the union consented to a ratio of one apprentice to each five journeymen.

The use of "unskilled help" on "sand cutting and work of like character" was fully agreed to by the union representatives at the 1902 conference with the Defense Association in conformity with the organization's tolerance for the use of helpers of this class. Nothing was said in the agreement, however, about the hiring or payment of these persons. As a matter of practice, quite contrary to the union's rule of 1899, helpers of this description were usually employed and paid by the journeymen in all of the important stove foundries. Consequently, the arrangement was continued in most places. In 1912 the convention declared once more that all laboring work should be paid for by foundrymen and urged that an effort be made to secure an agreement with the Defense Association in harmony with this position. Until such an understanding could be reached, no member was to employ any helper under sixteen years of age. Yet in recognition of the union's inability to prohibit the payment of helpers by piece workers, the rules of 1899 and previous years were dropped and in their place was adopted the recommendation "that the incoming officers do all in their power to discourage the system of helpers by any member working under the piece-work system."²⁵ In most stove shops today, however, the molders either pay helpers to cut sand and to do the other unskilled work or else, if the helpers are paid by the foundrymen, the molders accept a discount on their piece rates to compensate the employers.

At present in car-wheel shops and other establishments where large castings are made the helper proper has practically replaced the apprentice, although as a rule he does not finish molds. He does, however, prepare the chill, insert the pattern, ram the flask, and assist in pouring off.

²⁵ Proceedings, 1912, p. 248.

Generally speaking, it can be said that "in shops where small castings are made, the work of the helper is so remote from that of the molder that helpers have little opportunity to learn the more skilled processes of molding. In such cases the apprentice system prevails." In plants making large castings, however, if a considerable variety of work is turned out, helpers have an opportunity to be promoted to the position of molders and are so advanced if they show special aptitude. Thus, while the journeymen have been able to restrict the helper in a large degree to work requiring little skill, they have not found it feasible to "clear the boards."²⁶ Nor, indeed, as shown above, have they been able to compel employers to pay all helpers.

²⁶ Ashworth, p. 71.

CHAPTER XIII

MOLDING MACHINERY

As early as 1860 English, Scotch, French and American inventors interested themselves in experiments with mechanical sand-rammers. For the most part their efforts suffered from being too ambitious and no practical results were achieved. The first attempted use of molding machinery in America appears to have occurred in 1866 when the molders of Troy were confronted with a machine which had been set up in a local shop to offset a strike. The promoters of the device, which was known as the "Yankee Molder," claimed at first that it could "do the work of ten men." For a brief period it was "held as a rod of terror over the men until its merits were tested." In spite of "almost superhuman efforts," the machine proved a "miserable failure" and was "sent off to other regions."¹ Yet the progress of mechanical research went on. As soon as attention was given to the perfection of one step at a time, devices were discovered which paved the way for really workable machines.

Probably the most elementary molding machine was the sand-match which relieved the necessity of making a parting by hand. It is extensively used today and is supplemented on large work by the follow-board. Succeeding these instruments came the match-plate, the stripping-plate and the stripping-plate machine. All of these devices were hand-ramming machines, and while they assisted in drawing the pattern and prevented waste in patching, they in no way relieved the manual labor of ramming and handling the sand.² While hand-ramming machines were being perfected the power rammer was also being gradually devel-

¹ International Journal, June, 1866, p. 89.

² J. C. Mills, Searchlights on Some American Industries, p. 213.

oped. "The first machines of this kind used extensively in this country were the hand squeezers, through which power was transmitted by levers or toggles to press the sand to the required hardness. They materially assisted the molder in ramming and were generally employed in connection with the sand-match or match-plate." Patterns still had to be drawn by hand, however. From one account the first squeezer was invented by J. P. Broadmeadow of Bridgeport, Connecticut, about 1875. By 1886 inventors had produced squeezers which were operated by mechanical power. The squeezer, which has always been used for handling comparatively small patterns, was followed by pneumatic, hydraulic, or steam presses capable of ramming large pieces. Jarring machines, in combination with pattern-drawing and pressure-ramming devices, were next developed. The latest and most complete invention has been the automatic molding machine which is "neither a mere ramming device nor a mere pattern-drawing machine, although it performs both these important functions in a perfect manner. Under the control of a single operator it performs all the work necessary to complete a perfect mold in the shortest possible time." Some of the machines used today "will take flasks up to seven or eight feet in diameter, and in the square type, up to eight feet width or fourteen feet in length."⁸ While the heavier machines have been introduced to a considerable extent, the squeezer has found the greatest favor because there are more small than large castings to be made and because it is generally agreed that molding machines operate best on small patterns. It is impossible to estimate the number of machines of different types now in operation.

There has been considerable discussion as to how far molding machinery excels hand processes in speed and efficiency. In 1908 a committee reported to the Stove Founders' National Defense Association that while the

⁸ Ibid., pp. 208, 224-227.

output of any machine would vary with the type of machine, the size, weight, and style of patterns and pattern rigging, the molding costs on stoves made with the use of machines varied from thirty to fifty per cent below the costs of hand molding. It was acknowledged, however, that to this general statement many notable exceptions could be found since in some cases of bench molding the reduction would amount to little more than twenty per cent, while in other instances the reduction would reach about sixty-six per cent of the floor or bench prices for hand molding. The committee also admitted that there were certain items of cost that tended to offset the economy of machine molding. Such factors were the cost of extra help for handling iron, flasks and sand, the cost of making changes in patterns, and the depreciation of and repairs to machinery. The committee did not consider such items of great importance.⁴ It is interesting to observe, however, that officers of the union believe that the off-setting costs are generally greater than foundrymen or machine makers are willing to acknowledge. Whatever the exact figures on cost may be, we can be sure of one thing, that molding machinery, properly employed, effects a saving; otherwise such machinery would never have achieved its present degree of popularity.

The first important efforts to introduce the use of molding machines in America took place in the eighties. Generally speaking, union men then maintained that molding machines had been, and would continue to be, failures. For example, it was pointed out that when the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company endeavored to defeat a strike in 1885 by the use of eighteen machines, it found them unworkable. In 1889 it was said that there were hundreds of squeezers "lying around useless, except as they may be used as benches in a large number of the malleable and hardware shops of the country, and employers who have long since

⁴ Report of Committee on Machinery, p. 12.

proved their uselessness would be glad to dispose of them at any price.”⁵ With the leaders of the union, however, the possibilities of molding machinery were not so lightly put aside. In 1880 an editorial statement in the official union journal held that although machines had “so far been failures in one and the most important point, that of cost,” yet there could “be no reasonable doubt” that in time they would “be made successful for certain kinds of work, both as regards speed and cost.”⁶ From the very first the officers realized that the machine was coming and that no action of theirs could stop it. During the last half of the nineties foundrymen began to make more use of machinery. It became increasingly evident that on bench work, where the same piece was made over and over again, the squeezer was obtaining fair success. Jolting and jarring machines for larger work were also finding place in many establishments. The editor of the official journal of the union became more and more apprehensive over the inroads of labor-saving devices. In 1896 he claimed that, although machinery had come into the foundry as well as into other industrial establishments, “it would seem, however, that in some branches of our trade, unless a machine can be devised which is provided with reasoning power, human effort guided by human intelligence must always be employed.”⁷ One year later the editor admitted that the trade was by no means “proof against the genius of the inventor” even though many molding machines had been “signal failures.”⁸ At about the same time he noted that the McCormick and Deering harvesting machinery plants had successfully employed unskilled men on certain types of machines.

In general, union molders at first “ignored the machine.

⁵ Iron Molders' Journal, November, 1889, p. 3.

⁶ Ibid., January, 1880, p. 13.

⁷ Ibid., February, 1896, p. 65. A similar notion was held by many printers prior to the introduction of the linotype. President Sylvius also said in 1866 that molders need never fear machinery, because it would take “a *thinking machine* to make castings.”

⁸ Ibid., May, 1897, p. 221.

They refused to work on it. They made no effort, except in rare instances, to exclude it and did not attempt to regulate its introduction to any extent."⁹ Its operation was mostly carried on with apprentices and unskilled workmen. As time went on the attitude of the journeymen changed and they agreed to operate the machine so long as there was union control of piece prices, etc. They generally made no effort, however, to bring out the best qualities of the various devices but evidently endeavored to make them as unprofitable as possible with a view to restricting their increase.

In 1897 the editorial columns of the official journal of the union began to advocate a liberal machine policy. The following statement is typical: "The experience of other trades and our own experience in the matter of labor-saving devices point conclusively to the ultimate triumph of invention. . . . It is the height of folly to attempt to prohibit or even to oppose the introduction of labor-saving machinery. All efforts in that direction are doomed to ignominious failure. . . . As a trade organization, we would not be justified in assuming a position of antagonism . . . , but, profiting by the example of the printers, should seek in every way to control its operation."¹⁰ From the same source came the statement that already machinery had thrown additional work to journeymen, either directly or indirectly. A cheapened cost of production, it was pointed out, had led to an increased demand for iron manufactures and thus had "served to offset to a considerable extent the displacement that would otherwise have occurred."¹¹ Taking the above quotations as a whole, it would be difficult to find a more correct analysis of the economics of machinery anywhere else in the annals of trade unionism.

At the 1899 convention President Fox advocated the adoption of a policy which would recognize the facts as

⁹ E. T. Cheetham, "The Molding Machine," Johns Hopkins University Circular, April, 1907, p. 37.

¹⁰ Iron Molders' Journal, May, 1897, p. 222.

¹¹ Ibid., July, 1898, p. 330.

they were. He urged that all members agree to work machines with the intention of bringing out their full capacity, provided satisfactory agreements as to wages could be made. The organization then would be in a position where it could hope to control the machine and prevent the trade from sinking to the level of unskilled labor. If union men did not drop their "old-time prejudices" and endeavor to control the machine, Fox warned that in time the machine would control them.¹² The convention yielded to the president's advice and voted to make it the policy of the union to establish jurisdiction over the molding machine operator, to advise and instruct members "to accept jobs upon any molding machine when the opportunity is afforded, and to endeavor to bring out their best possibilities," and to bring the question of machine operation and control before the various foundrymen or foundrymen's associations.¹³

The Iron Molders' Journal at once hailed the adoption of the resolution as "the beginning of a new era" in the history of the organization which was now placed "in the front rank of progressive trade unionism." It was, of course, true that the liberals had won a victory over the conservatives. Yet the realization of the union's ambitions were far from being achieved by the mere announcement of a policy. Would the comparatively unskilled machine operators join the union which had extended its jurisdiction over them? Would union journeymen work on machines at all and, if so, would they try to produce a normal output? Would employers give journeymen jobs on machines? What wage scales should be adopted for machine work? These were the main questions which now perplexed the union in its search for a solution of the machine problem.

Although the executive board was authorized to proceed as rapidly as possible with the organizing of machine operators, it was not until April, 1901, when two local unions in Indianapolis led the way in announcing their desire to organ-

¹² Proceedings, 1899, p. 11.

¹³ Constitution, 1899, Standing Resolution No. 38.

ize the machine operators in their jurisdictions, that permission for the formation of an operators' local union was secured. The 1902 convention felt the need for action and instructed the incoming officers to organize, wherever possible, "all competent machine operators, radiator molders, and all other classified specialist molders, granting them a separate charter, or affiliating them with locals already in existence, as circumstances may dictate."¹⁴ As in 1899, the affiliation of the machine operator was regarded as a part of the general problem produced by the specialization of the trade however occasioned.

In 1907 President Valentine reported that only 273 operators had been taken into membership. In 1912 the figures were not given, but it was stated that the union had been successful in "organizing a number" of men within the specialty. At present the union refuses to state how many operators belong to it.

When machine operators were first admitted at Indianapolis they were required to have served an apprenticeship at their branch of two years, although the constitution of the union required four years' apprenticeship or actual work at the trade as a prerequisite for admission. The executive board was compelled in 1903 to rule that the four-year term must be applied to all branches of the trade, to machine operators as well as to others. Considerable protest was aroused by the decision since it was evident that efficient operators could be trained in much less time than four years. The policy remained unchanged, however, until 1906 when the executive board decided that where competent operators had not served a full four years they were to be granted a due book containing a certificate of membership giving them the right to accept jobs on machines under the jurisdiction of any local union. They were not entitled to do work on the floor or bench unless they had fulfilled the four-year apprenticeship. In later years

¹⁴ Proceedings, 1902, p. 760.

it was decided to substitute for the due book a "machine molder's card," stating the time the bearer had worked on a machine. In many shops where machine molders have been employed few, if any, apprentices have been recognized. In such places since 1906 special union cards have been granted operators who have had less than four years' experience and ordinary cards have been given those who have had that experience. In 1912 a rule was made for stove shops which observed the regular apprentice ratio of the union, namely, one boy to five journeymen. It was now provided that machine molders who had not served their four-years time would not be allowed to work in these shops unless there was a vacancy in the number of apprentices. In other words, operators under these circumstances were to be considered as apprentices and could not be granted a card of any sort until their time was up. The purpose of this regulation, it would seem, was simply to restrict the use of machine men.

Quite naturally, journeymen molders did not eagerly compete for the opportunity of operating machines just as soon as the union adopted its policy of toleration. Their prejudices were too deep seated for that. Yet very soon after a union molder had declared in 1899 that "the most contemptible act a true union man could do was to manipulate a molding machine," a Philadelphia local union reported that its members were at work on squeezers.¹⁵ After considerable urging from the international office other localities conformed. On the manufacturers' part no haste was evinced in welcoming journeymen to the task of machine operation. The former seemed fairly well satisfied with the laborers they had broken in and expressed the fear that union molders, especially, would endeavor to hamper the output of machines if they were employed thereon. Foundrymen sensed the machine as a means whereby they might escape union "dictation," and they were by no means anxious to restore the old situation.

¹⁵ Iron Molders' Journal, August, 1899, p. 413; September, p. 462.

In order to secure the machine for its own the union resorted both to peaceful and to forcible persuasion. Its spokesmen argued that a skilled molder could handle a machine better than a green laborer. The latter might do well enough at pulling the levers on a squeezer, but when it came to finishing the flask the molder had the decided advantage. On all rough work, in fact, the "Castle-Garden man" might have the advantage owing purely to superior physical strength, but the finer work, it was held, required the touch and skill of a molder. The union also argued that its members stood "pledged to bring out the best possibilities of molding machines" and did not seek to get control so as to "limit the output or injure the reputation of the machine." Control was sought because it was the "interest of the individual molder and part of the work of his organization to retain for him some of the benefits accruing from the introduction of labor-saving machinery in the foundry." "Justice to the machine and the man" was advocated, it was claimed.¹⁶ As the foundrymen in most instances appeared unaffected by the union's philosophy, sterner means had to be employed before actual headway was made in the campaign. Strikes were called in some shops where sufficient floor or bench work remained to make the journeymen a factor to be reckoned with.

Since a large number of foundrymen belonged to the National Founders' Association, with which the union had a conciliation agreement, it soon seemed wise to have the whole question settled in conference as far as the Founders' shops were concerned.¹⁷ In June, 1900, representatives of the union met with the administrative council of the Association in a conference at which the machine question was taken up. The Association asserted that since the molding machine was a product of the machine shop and not of the

¹⁶ Ibid., November, 1899, p. 583.

¹⁷ By 1900 nearly ten per cent of the total molding force employed by the National Founders' Association were machine operators. See below, p. 200.

foundry, it did not fall under the "jurisdiction" of the molders and that since the employer had produced it at his own expense, he should have the right to operate it "in whatever manner he may elect," as with his power plant, cranes and other equipment. In reply the union proposed that as the machine was "but an improved tool designed to cheapen and increase the product of the molder and represents both additional capital invested by the foundryman in his business and a different method of applying and utilizing the capital of the molder, we recognize that each is mutually interested in the manner of its operation." In an amendment then offered by the Association to the union's resolution it was conceded that the machine was but an "improved tool," yet it was insisted that the employer should have the right to "operate in whatever manner he may elect." The conference deadlocked on all propositions so that no agreement was reached.¹⁸

At the conclusion of a prolonged strike in Cleveland the union was able to obtain satisfaction in part of its claims in a local agreement reached with Association members. Section 8 of the agreement read: "The right of the foundryman to introduce or operate molding machines in his foundry shall not be questioned. In determining who shall operate them, regard shall be given to how their best possibilities can be brought out, and how the work can be most economically produced."¹⁹ While the agreement did not state definitely that molders were to be used on machines, it did not, on the other hand, put up the bars against them. Vagueness upon this point was due partly to the absence of a national understanding and partly to a desire to leave the local situation open to developments. In other localities individual employers, like the General Electric Company, refused to displace laborers in favor of molders until a national agreement had been reached. It availed little in these cases

¹⁸ Iron Molders' Journal, July, 1900, pp. 385, 387.

¹⁹ Ibid., March, 1901, pp. 134, 136.

to point out instances where the union's international officers had compelled local unions to renounce restrictions on machine output or where investigation showed that molders could operate "at such a piece-work price as to bring the total cost of the work done by the machine down to a figure comparing very favorably with the best figures obtained on the same machine by unskilled labor."²⁰ The best the union's leaders could do under the circumstances was to urge the membership to accept every opportunity for machine operation with the intention of convincing foundry-men that molders could be trusted to bring out "the best possibilities" of the different devices.

At the fifth annual convention of the National Founders' Association held in 1901 strong sentiment was expressed, not only in favor of the machine as a paying device, but also in advocacy of the use of laborers as operators. Only a few of the delegates seemed to believe that laborers were inferior to molders on machine work. Consequently, it is not surprising that an informal conference between the contending parties in April, 1902, proved unproductive of results. On this occasion the union took the ground that the manufacturers were unfair in rejecting the molder operator before he had been tested. Complaint was also registered against employing laborers on "simple sucking devices used for drawing patterns on the bench" on the ground that they were "machines." On real machines, it was claimed, the operator was a specialist molder, skilled in the use of tools, and not a mere "handy-man." In reply the employers affirmed that the machine eliminated all skill and, therefore, it would be absurd to put a molder on it in every instance. Yet the Association said it had not determined to refuse employment to molders as operators, but had left each member to decide his own policy. It was admitted that it had been found profitable to employ molders on some machines. If the union would agree to a differential in wages for all

²⁰ Ibid., November, 1900, p. 656.

molder operators, many more might find places. A similar result would ensue if journeymen would give up all attempts to restrict output. In its final reply the union admitted that machine operators might properly be subject to a different wage classification than the skilled molders, yet it held that "it was absurd to class them as laborers and unfair to grade their earning power upon that basis."²¹

With the conference of October, 1902, it became evident that the Association was on the way toward dissolving friendly relations with the union. The Association positively refused to discuss the revision of the New York Agreement or adoption of a shorter workday, the two things upon which the union then lay the most stress, until the machine question and several other important issues were settled to its satisfaction. At the following convention of the Association in November the machine difficulty was made the subject of a "very drastic resolution" which held it to be "the absolute right of any member of this Association to operate a molding machine, or any mechanical device to further molding, in such manner as best serves his interest," and which pledged the strength and resources of the Association to the support of a member making such use of a molding machine."²² In 1903 and again in 1904 the Association, as a part of a comprehensive program, asked for the adoption of an agreement which would absolutely nullify the union's claims concerning the machine. All parts of the proposed plan were equally objectionable to the latter organization so that no headway was made in reaching any kind of a settlement at these conferences. After the 1904 meeting the Association abrogated the New York Agreement and the union lost all hope of the adjustment of the machine problem in machinery and jobbing plants through agreements with the organized foundrymen.

The machine question was also taken up with the Stove Founders' National Defense Association. The conference

²¹ Ibid., May, 1902, p. 287.

²² Ibid., December, 1902, p. 1036.

of March, 1905, recognized "the desirability of introducing new methods and machines in stove foundries, also that such processes are entitled to consideration on fixing prices and wages."²⁸ The vagueness of this treatment of the question left no real issue settled. In 1907 one such issue came up when the Association asked that its members be granted the right to operate machines by unskilled labor. A sub-committee, to which the resolution was referred, reached some "mutual understanding" which was not transmitted to the public, but the conference itself took no action. Whatever this settlement was, its terms certainly did not go far toward favoring the common laborer since journeymen molders thereafter continued to serve as operators in increasing numbers. In 1908, 1909, 1910, and 1912 the Defense Association again asked that machines in members' shops "be operated in any manner the manufacturer may desire." The employers contended that the molders had shown such antipathy to machines that they did not operate them to their full capacity and that common labor provided superior operators. The union representatives feared that the adoption of the proposal would mean the exclusive employment of laborers on machines, and they refused to agree to it.

Since piece work prevailed almost entirely in the stove branch, it seemed wise to both parties to the conference agreement to apply the system to machine output. The only serious question was that of proper rates. This problem the 1908 conference endeavored to solve by establishing a basic rate of \$4.00 net per day. What the normal output of a certain piece should be was to be determined by the work of an expert operator furnished by the employer. The number of good castings made by a test run of one day was then to be used as a divisor of the basic wage and the result of the division was to be the piece price. By a "machine" was meant "primarily the simple squeezer, when

²⁸ Ibid., April, 1905, p. 251.

match plates are used, considering this the lowest type of machine."²⁴ Inasmuch as this arrangement did not afford an opportunity for equalizing machine prices in different shops in 1912, a committee of three from each side was appointed to "investigate the molding machine and improved methods of molding for the purpose of arriving at a fair and just method of pricing the work."²⁵ No agreement was reached, however, until 1914, when the original \$4.00 basis was given up and it was decided to price all machine work by comparison with the rates prevailing at Taunton, Massachusetts.

Taunton prices were chosen because the Weir Stove Works of that city had been operating its molding machines with non-union laborers for about four years and it had carefully preserved records of their output. During the same period the earnings of hand molders on much the same class of work as that put up by the machines were also kept on file. Previous to the 1914 conference the Weir Company decided to run its machines with union members. Accordingly, the general manager and a vice-president of the union proceeded to spend considerable time in adjusting new prices for work made on the machines. The principle which they applied in determining the piece rates for machine molders was that the prices should be such that a molder's total earnings would not be reduced because he happened to be placed upon a machine. For example, if a hand molder's weekly earnings averaged \$25 per week and his output was 500 molds, the rates for the machine were so set that he could still earn \$25 weekly on the average, even though he might be compelled to put up 750 to 1,000 molds. The machine rates were set for a molder working at normal speed. According to this plan the firm obtained a lower price per piece, but the molders were enabled to secure as high earnings by machine work as they had previously been making by hand work. In other words,

²⁴ International Molders' Journal, January, 1909, p. 13.

²⁵ Ibid., January, 1913, pp. 26, 28.

the molders were saved from having their earnings cut to the level of unskilled labor.

In conclusion we may consider how far machine introduction has affected the strength of the union. It is of interest in this connection to quote from a writer who has given detailed attention to this aspect of the subject. In closing her discussion of the diverging policies of the union and the National Founders' Association, Miss Stecker says: ²⁶

The following table, based on figures furnished by the secretary of the National Founders' Association, shows the per cent machine operators were of the total molding force in foundries of Association members at different periods:

1900.....	9.4 per cent
1905.....	14.4 per cent
1910.....	19.4 per cent
1913.....	22.8 per cent

In the same time, skilled bench and floor molders changed in relative importance to the total molding force as follows, constituting in

1900.....	75.7 per cent
1905.....	63.0 per cent
1910.....	54.3 per cent
1913.....	51.8 per cent

Comparing these two groups, it appears that while molding machine operators have increased considerably in importance in proportion to the total molding force in Association foundries, skilled mechanics have been displaced at a more than proportionate rate. It thus would seem that machine operators alone cannot be charged with having driven journeymen from their accustomed trade. Of nearly as great importance in bringing this about has been the increase in numbers of unskilled specialty molders. Data available do not permit of distinguishing this class of labor from apprentices in 1900, but the increase even from 1905 to 1913 is significant.

Per cent specialty molders were of the total molding force:

1905.....	9.5 per cent
1910.....	15.0 per cent
1913.....	15.6 per cent

These figures, taken in connection with the preceding groups, must not, however, be used as conclusive evidence that unskilled workmen are usurping the places of journeymen in the foundries of

²⁶ Stecker, "The Founders, the Molders, and the Molding Machine," in the Quarterly Journal of Economics, February, 1918, pp. 305-308.

members of the National Founders' Association, because of the fact that there is no way of measuring to how great an extent the class of foundries making up the membership of that body has changed, so as to offer a wider opportunity for the employment of laborers. Nevertheless, from the facts available it seems likely that while skilled mechanics continue to occupy an important position in Association foundries, their place is gradually being taken by inferior craftsmen.

How this tendency compares with conditions generally cannot be stated. In 1910 the National Founders' Association employed 13.4 per cent of all those in the country who worked at the trade of molding. Eighty-five per cent of its members run open shops. It is therefore possible that among those foundries where union influence has had more weight, skilled journeymen are of relatively greater importance than in the shops of the Association. Certainly up to 1908, the Union had succeeded admirably in controlling the machine situation in the shops of the Stove Founders' National Defense Association, and as these two latter bodies never came to an agreement as to the pricing of work done on the machines until 1914, it is quite likely there has been but little change up to the present time.

The Union itself offers no data as to the relative importance within its membership of skilled mechanics, specialty molders and machine operators. Nor is there any satisfactory means of estimating the probable composition of its membership at the present time as compared with twenty years ago. It seems very probable, however, on the basis of known facts, that even though the numbers over a given period are substantially identical, a smaller and smaller proportion are skilled men.

This much is true: molding machines have made serious inroads upon the molders' trade; the employers of the country have come to realize the value of machines and are using them in ever increasing quantities; the Molders' Union has been obliged to alter its policy at a number of points to allow for the changed conditions. On the other hand, it is not true that machines have made human skill unnecessary for foundry work. There is still a great demand for trained men. Even with specialization and machine molding, experts are required to set cores, finish and close molds, and perform other similar operations demanding the application of technique and judgment. Some types of molding are as yet entirely unadapted to the machine.

According to the leaders of the union the machine has had little or no effect toward weakening their organization. On the other hand, they do not represent it as having had a strengthening influence. They recognize the fact that in some specialty shops, like the Ford Motor Company, practically all the molding is done on machines by non-union men and that it will be difficult for the union to make much headway in such places. In a majority of the country's foundries a considerable amount of hand molding still

obtains. According to figures just quoted, even in the shops of the National Founders' Association hand molders outnumber machine molders. By making steady gains in the membership of floor molders the union has been able to maintain a large degree of control over the majority of foundries under its jurisdiction. During the past ten years, especially, the union has been able to increase materially the wages of its members, whether floor, bench or machine hands. These advances have been gained in all sorts of shops, embracing stove, machinery and jobbing, bench, and brass-molding establishments.

The last action to be taken by the union upon the machine question came at the 1912 convention. The rule was then adopted that, as "handymen" operators were a means of throwing molders out of employment, in the future all molding machines must be operated by members of the union or apprentices. It was further provided that no member be permitted to teach anyone, save another member, how to run a machine, on pain of expulsion, and that no honorary member be allowed to act as a foreman over machines unless they were served by union members. In recent years the union has been conservative about adopting policies and rules which are at all difficult to carry out. It would appear, therefore, that the union today is confident of its ability to control the machine.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CLOSED SHOP, THE LABEL AND THE BOYCOTT

The Closed Shop.—Insufficient data prevents a full statement of the attitude of the early local unions toward non-members. Judging from other trades, such as the printers, we may assume that union molders from the outset objected, in a greater or less degree, to working with non-unionists. In particular there was opposition to the "rat" or "scab" who deliberately violated union rules. One early form of scabbing consisted of working below the standard wage rate. In 1855 the Philadelphia union provided that if any member worked for less than the piece or day prices, it should be the duty of every other member "to refuse to work in the shop, if required to do so by the Executive Committee, while such journeyman is employed at a reduced price." This rule, however, only applied to shops "represented" in the union by an executive or shop committee, or shops over which the organization exercised some control. When a member went to work in an "unrepresented" shop he was given a card exempting him "from the payment of Dues and the Laws in regard to prices and all other regulations of the Union that may not be applicable to such a case." Upon his return to a "represented" foundry, the member was required to deposit the exemption card and he once more became "subject to all the laws and regulations" of the union.¹

Other steps in the evolution of the closed-shop rule cannot be traced. However, when the general union was formed in 1859 it had become an accepted principle that

¹ Journeymen Stove and Hollow-ware Moulders' Union of Philadelphia, Constitution and By-Laws, 1855, art. 2, sec. 4; art. 6, sec. 1. Another rule of the union required a pledge from each initiate that he would procure employment for a fellow member "in preference to any other person" (By-Laws, art. 4).

non-members should be excluded, as far as possible, from working with unionists. For example, on April 18, 1860, the Troy local union resolved "to make it as uncomfortable . . . as possible" for an expelled member and on June 2, 1864, it was voted that members working in "Watson's Shop" should cease work because one of the shop's crew had refused to join the union. On July 2, 1864, members were forbidden to work with a rejected applicant for admission and on September 8 members in good standing were instructed to stop working with other members who refused to pay a strike assessment levied by the International Union.²

Local unions for several years had a free hand in scabbing both journeymen and employers who had violated union rules. There were many cases of expulsion for working in struck shops and for refusing to pay dues and assessments. Expelled members, strike breakers, and price-cutting non-unionists were all labeled scabs and were strictly barred from union shops. Local union No. 8 of Albany voted in 1865 to exclude permanently any person who went to work in the scabbed shop of one Ransom as long as the proprietor refused to run a union establishment. Other instances can be found where stringent resolutions were adopted against ordinary non-members. For example, local union No. 18 of Louisville voted in 1866 that after July 5, 1867, no member "be allowed to work in any foundry" under its jurisdiction "where there is any person employed at molding who is not a member." Non-unionists "were respectfully petitioned to join on or before the fifth day of July, 1867, or be forever thereafter deprived of such privilege."³

While some local unions were severe in their attitude toward non-unionists in general and scabs in particular, it was not possible for others to pursue a policy of rigid con-

² Troy Local Union, Minutes, MS.

³ International Journal, December, 1866, p. 256.

trol over employment. Accordingly, when the international union was first asked to make a general rule that "after a certain date no member should be allowed to work in any scab shop," action on the measure was indefinitely postponed. Again, in 1867 it was voted bad policy "for union men to quit work on account of non-union men working in the same shop."⁴ But while it favored conciliatory measures in lieu of hasty action against non-members, the 1867 convention voted that each subordinate union should require union cards from all strange journeymen obtaining employment under its jurisdiction. Where an applicant for work had never had an opportunity to become a unionist, he was to be admitted to the shop, provided he expressed a desire to attain membership at the next meeting of the union "and provided further, that members . . . in good standing . . . always have the preference" in filling vacant floors.⁵ From this time onward monthly reports from local unions frequently contained the brief warning, "No card, no work." The injunction applied both to non-unionists and to union members traveling without cards. In 1874 the rule of 1867 was supplemented by a provision which ordered local unions to refuse consent to "members going to work in scab or non-union shops unless they have positive hopes of recovering such shops."⁶ There never has been a time, however, when the union has had a hard and fast rule forbidding its members to work beside non-members. In many cases it has proved impracticable to attempt closed-shop enforcement. In other instances non-members have been easily excluded from employment. Every local union has understood that while open shops are to be abolished when possible, ill-advised strikes against non-unionists are not to be called. In view of these considerations, it has not been deemed necessary for international union to set up a rigid standard. In all cases a policy of expediency has been followed.

⁴ Proceedings, 1866, p. 28; 1867, p. 53.

⁵ Constitution, 1867, art. II, sec. 5.

⁶ Proceedings, 1874, p. 71.

Between 1860 and 1870 the Molders pursued the closed-shop policy with greater vigor than any other union. In 1863 the activity of the organization resulted in calling forth a protest from the Iron Founders' and Machine Builders' Association of the Falls of the Ohio, which declared in an address to the trade that discrimination against non-unionists meant "arbitrary interference with the business management" of employers.⁷ From this time onward many foundrymen, singly or collectively, began to manifest determined opposition to union control. Thus, in 1881 three Quincy, Illinois, employers complained against the rule of local union No. 44 "that no molder shall be employed who is not satisfactory to those already employed" and declared their intention to employ such labor as "appears to be to our best interests."⁸ In still other instances employers precipitated strikes by trying to force union members to sign contracts to give up membership in the organization.

When the first joint conference with the Stove Founders' National Defense Association was held in 1891, many association members were operating unorganized shops. The conference at once decided that completely non-union establishments should not come under its jurisdiction. After some discussion it was also agreed that open shops should be subject to the agreements only where a majority of the molders employed were union men. Finally, however, it was provided in 1898 that even in open shops where union men were in a minority the organized molders might submit a difficulty between themselves and their employer to the presidents of the two associations, or to their representatives, whenever the dispute could not be settled locally in an amicable fashion. This ruling resulted in bringing practically all stove foundries under the agreement, and in encouraging non-members to join the union

⁷ Stockton, "The Closed Shop in American Trade Unions," Johns Hopkins Studies in Historical and Political Science, Series XXIX, 1911, pp. 36-37.

⁸ Iron Molders' Journal, April, 1881, p. 6.

so that their grievances might be heard. At the conventions of 1895 and 1899 certain delegates strongly urged that action be taken against open shops by "demanding from the proprietors who are members of the Defense Association, recognition of the Union" and that forthcoming joint conferences be impressed with "the absolute necessity of having all stove shops where our members are employed made union shops."⁹ These ideas met with approval and at the 1900 conference the Molders' representatives proposed that all members of the Defense Association recognize union rules and regulations as binding upon their foundries. Two chief arguments were advanced in favor of universal recognition. It was asserted that since all but ten or twelve association members were running "practically union shops," it would not be a radical measure to require complete recognition. It was also urged that a compulsory union shop would tend to place all foundrymen upon "an equitable basis."¹⁰ Strong opposition to the proposal was manifested by the Association, and the plan failed of adoption. Seven years later the foundrymen submitted a counter resolution to the effect that no molders or core-maker be refused employment in or be discharged from any foundry covered by the joint agreements because of membership or non-membership in the union. A sub-committee appointed to consider the measure succeeded in reaching an understanding substantially in accord with the resolution, but the conference itself took no action. No authorized strikes against non-unionists have ever taken place in association foundries nor have members of the Association ever contested the gradual unionization of their plants.

The "open-shop issue" played an important part in bringing about the abrogation of the New York Agreement with the National Founders' Association in 1904. Prior to that time a union shop was recognized by the machinery and jobbing foundrymen in some cases as, for example, in the

⁹ Proceedings, 1895, p. 86; 1899, pp. 65, 173.

¹⁰ Iron Molders' Journal, April, 1900, p. 187.

settlement of the big Cleveland strike in 1901. Here it was provided that scabs at work in the shops affected by the strike might complete the period for which they were under contract. Foundrymen were also given forty days' time in which to dispose of other non-union employees with whom no contracts had been made. At the conclusion of the periods stated union men only were to be employed unless it developed that the supply of unionists failed to provide the firms with the necessary number of molders. During the three years following the adoption of the Cleveland settlement the Founders increasingly manifested their disposition to regard the degree of organization as a question with which the New York Agreement was not concerned, and in 1904 they insisted that the union definitely recognize the open shop. The demand was refused. Representatives of the union pointed out that at no time had their organization requested a general understanding in favor of the closed shop. After the agreement was abrogated the Founders began an active campaign against the closed shop. At the present time many foundries affiliated with the Association are again operating "strict union shops" in spite of that organization's open-shop pronouncements.

In enforcing the simple closed shop there have been some instances where local molders' unions have allowed no men without union cards to begin work in fully organized shops. As a general rule, however, ordinary non-members who have had no "record" have been permitted to obtain employment in such establishments on condition that they apply for membership within from twenty-four to forty-eight hours after beginning work. Suspended members have rarely been in good favor. In practice they have been considered even more undesirable than ordinary non-members, especially when their suspension has been due to gross carelessness or indifference. Particular opprobrium has attached to the journeyman who has refused to pay his dues while working in an open shop. When suspension has been

caused by a member's poverty, no objection has ordinarily been made against his continued employment for a reasonable time with members in good standing. Expelled members and scabs have never been allowed to work with unionists except where the organization has been temporarily unable to object. During sharp jurisdictional fights members of rival unions have been treated much the same as scabs. Honorary members returning to the trade have been required to take out active cards before going to work in union shops. Foremen who "work on the floor" have not been entitled to honorary membership but have been required to hold active cards. Foremen have frequently had their honorary cards annulled for hiring scabs or for trying to run non-union shops.

The principles of the extended closed shop have also been observed by the Molders. As early as March 19, 1865, local union No. 2 of Troy voted that members should make neither stove nor machinery work for struck shops. In 1881 members working in the Victor Stove Company of Salem, Ohio, refused to mold certain castings intended to fill orders for a struck shop in St. Louis. In 1886 the International Union provided that whenever an employer who had locked out his hands proposed getting his work made elsewhere, it should "be the duty of all members under this jurisdiction to refuse to work on said jobs."¹¹ In 1887 occurred the "great lockout" which had its start in the Bridge and Beach foundry of St. Louis. As the dispute with foundrymen through the Central West became general, the Molders' executive board, for tactical reasons, ordered members in the eastern shops "to work on St. Louis patterns if offered." It was believed that the manufacturers had agreed upon a general lockout and that they were courting the rejection of patterns "as a pretext to throw the blame on the molders." The international officers also

¹¹ Constitution, 1886, art. 8, sec. 7. In 1890 the rule was amended to read that members should "refuse to work on said jobs or in any shop where said work is made" (Proceedings, 1890, p. 79).

felt that it was necessary to affect a settlement with foundrymen outside of St. Louis, if possible, since the finances of the organization were not capable of standing too severe a strain.¹² Two years later, when the general lockout had subsided, we find the molders once more sanctioning "strikes against struck patterns." The extended closed shop has also been enforced at times when two or more foundries have been operated by the same firm. For example, in 1909 the executive board upheld the contention of members working in the plant of the American Car and Foundry Company at Terre Haute that a second foundry at Indianapolis should be unionized. In 1911 less positive action was taken with General Electric Company which was running union in its Schenectady plant but non-union in Erie. At the same time there was trouble in the Pittsfield plant. While it was urged in some quarters that a strike at Schenectady would have a good effect in bringing about full unionization, the executive board finally decided to use only peaceful efforts to obtain an agreement covering all shops of the Company. At the same time, however, the board voted to strike all shops of the International Steam Pump Company in order to secure "more effectiveness" for strikes being waged in three of the Company's plants.

The joint closed shop has been enforced by the Molders and allied trades in several instances. In the previous discussion relating to sympathetic strikes¹³ the Molders' policy in regard to joint action has been reviewed sufficiently to make further treatment of it unnecessary.

In securing the establishment of the closed shop the Molders have resorted to various methods. During the sixties and seventies it was common after unsuccessful strikes to "open" shops to union men. Members were even allowed to work in some scab shops, since local unions at this time exhibited such propensities for scabbing foundries for every possible cause that there were few union

¹² Iron Molders' Journal, May, 1887, p. 10.

¹³ See pp. 108-113.

shops left. It was soon found out that mere scabbing did not convert a plant into a union establishment. Hence, the 1872 convention recommended that scab shops all over the country be "opened" so that members could enter them for the purpose of winning them back. Two years later President Saffin declared this policy to be wrong since "not one shop has ever been redeemed by such a course, while many shops have been redeemed by union men refusing to work with a scab. . . . Instead of making union shops, the result of this course is usually that the so-called union men get careless, become tainted, are first suspended for non-payment of dues, and if trouble comes, are finally expelled for scabbing."¹⁴ In spite of Saffin's protest it has continued to be the policy of the organization in many cases to secure closed-shop establishments through a process of gradual unionization. Peaceful persuasion of non-members has not always been carried to the point of getting a full organization in the shop, however, since strikes have frequently been inaugurated to secure the closed shop when a union majority has been obtained. "Working under cover" has also been resorted to as a method of "fighting the devil with fire." This scheme has enabled the union to organize shops in secrecy where the employers have been anti-unionists.

The Molders have always enforced the closed shop through the card system. The first convention of 1859 adopted a "union card" to "be furnished to any member in good standing going from one union to another," and prohibited the use of any other kind of card.¹⁵ The "union card" in after years became known as the "clean card," and finally as the "active card," to distinguish it from the "honorary card." As soon as the bearer of a card obtains employment under a local union he is supposed to deposit his card with it. As long as he pays his dues regularly he is entitled to a new card. His standing with the union is determined from time to time by his record on the books

¹⁴ International Journal, August, 1874, p. 55.

¹⁵ Proceedings, 1859, p. 10.

of the local financial secretary. Since 1899 the Molders have also employed a "stamp book" in which a stamp is pasted when a member pays his weekly dues. A paid-up stamp book, however, is not acceptable in lieu of an active card as a proper credential for a traveling molder. In hundreds of instances traveling molders have continued to work in new jurisdictions "with their cards in their pockets." To compel adherence to the rule that all cards must be deposited promptly, delinquent members may be fined or have their cards annulled.

The enforcement of the closed shop has been taken care of locally by "union," "finance," or "shop committees," which are set up in each foundry which the organization endeavors to control. These committees receive cards from traveling members and keep on the watch for non-members employed in their shops. "Shop stewards" or "shop collectors" usually collect union dues from members in the various foundries although the committees just mentioned are sometimes employed for this service.

The Label.—In November, 1880, President Fitzpatrick called attention to the fact that the Cigar Makers had recently adopted a union label "for all cigars actually made by members of the union" and expressed the opinion that a similar device "furnished to employers running union foundries would have a good effect."¹⁶ The Cigar Makers' experiment was so novel, however, that not until 1884 did a second advocate of a molders' label appear. In that year a St. Louis member argued that if the Molders would copyright their seal "or some other suitable trade mark and then place this upon every stove that leaves the union foundries," the "union stove," thus marked, would soon drive all "scab stoves" out of the market, much to the benefit of fair employers and competent mechanics.¹⁷ In April, 1886, the executive board approved the adoption of a label and urged local unions to give "due consideration" to the

¹⁶ Iron Molders' Journal, November, 1880, p. 5.

¹⁷ Ibid., September, 1884, p. 3.

matter at the next convention. At this meeting the recommendations of the board were approved in a standing resolution which provided "that a uniform device, design, or mark be adopted by this union to be placed on all castings, to designate free and union-made work, the same to be copyrighted and distributed among the subordinate unions for use by all foundrymen who conduct fair establishments."¹⁸ The form and design on the label were left in the hands of the executive board. After concluding that a metal device would be impracticable, the board decided in favor of a paper label to be pasted on castings.

The paper label soon displayed many disadvantages. It proved difficult to obtain a satisfactory paste. Frequently labels were badly mutilated or actually torn off when castings were being handled. It was discovered, too, that firms to which labels were issued often sent the labels to retailers who placed them upon castings when customers demanded union-made goods. This practice obviously opened the way for affixing labels to goods which were not union-made. In view of these facts it was voted in 1899 to have the label consist of an impression placed in the patterns in such a way as to be both conspicuous and artistic. It was soon discovered, however, that foundrymen would not tolerate such a device. Accordingly, in 1902 the "white paper label" was restored after having been used, as a matter of fact, during the entire three-year period of its official rejection. Provision was also made in 1902 for stamping every label with the number of the issuing subordinate union. The international officers were empowered to have the label copyrighted and to prosecute infringements.

As noted above, the label was limited from the first to the use of "fair" establishments, that is, shops employing union men only and observing union rules. Soon after the adoption of the label it was stated that the device was "a guarantee" that every casting carrying it "was made by competent first class workmen who have served a regular

¹⁸ Proceedings, 1886, p. 56.

apprenticeship of the Iron Molders' Union" and that the firm which manufactured label goods was "giving employment to . . . our members and organization" in preference to "prisoners and other inferior workmen. . . ." ¹⁹ After 1895 employers operating two or more foundries were denied the use of the label unless all of their establishments were "strictly union shops." In 1899 the use of the label was withheld from foundrymen who did not pay the average wage rates prevailing in their districts. The original rules relating to the label provided that it should be placed upon "all castings" made under union conditions. In practice, however, the Molders have never forced an employer to use the label against his will.

At the annual conference held between the Molders and the Stove Founders' National Defense Association in 1904 it was asserted that those association members who did not use the label were virtually being boycotted by the campaign against non-label stoves. The Defense Association declared that this state of affairs was not compatible with the friendly relations existing between the two organizations. The Association further stated that it would like to drop the use of the label altogether. In case this were not possible, it proposed that its members who did not employ the label be given certificates as evidences of their compliance with general union regulations. President Valentine responded for the Molders that such certificates could not be granted except to proprietors of strictly union shops. At the time there were twenty or more members of the Defense Association who ran open shops and who would not have consented to unionization. The difficulty was finally settled by the Molders' representatives agreeing that their organization would not "itself or by any of its agents in any manner discriminate against the goods manufactured or sold by any member of the Stove Founders' National Defense Association because of the unwillingness of the

¹⁹ Iron Molders' Journal, March, 1887, p. 10. In 1888 it was reported that many employers had been refused the use of the label because they did not observe the apprenticeship ratio.

members of said Association to use the label." A copy of this agreement was ordered sent to every local union.²⁰

While the Molders have not used direct pressure to establish a wide employment of the label, they have at all times carried on a campaign of publicity. Soon after 1886 several local unions endeavored to promote the label by placing advertisements in newspapers, by having exhibits at industrial fairs, by soliciting dealers to handle label stoves, by issuing circulars, and by getting endorsements for the label from other trade unions or from central labor bodies. "Label committees" have generally directed these activities. From May to December, 1899, local union No. 210 of Perryville, Maryland, published a monthly paper called the Union Label for the purpose of creating a demand among union men generally for all union labels, but particularly for the Molders' label. Since many local unions did very little to push the label it was urged that the International Union take a more active part in directing label propaganda. In 1890 it was resolved to ask for recognition of the label by the Farmers' Alliance and to have organizers "handle the label" on their travels. In 1895 organizers were required to devote part of their time to lectures in the interest of the label. The 1895 convention also voted to "bring about closer relations with the carpenters and joiners and all federated trades and decide upon a place where hardware bearing the label could be bought direct from the manufacturer instead of [from] the hardware trust."²¹ Apparently nothing was done to give effect to this resolution. In 1899 the international president and executive board were voted a "reasonable sum" to be used at their discretion for label agitation. In 1902-1903 a grant of \$259.41 was made to the New England Conference Board under this provision. During the same period a special organizer was placed in the field to make an active campaign against non-union stoves and a facsimile of the label

²⁰ Ibid., April, 1904, p. 237.

²¹ Proceedings, 1895, pp. 78, 81.

was put in all stamp books in order that members might become familiar with the design. In 1913 the executive board sent an organizer on an extended tour throughout the South to work up a greater demand for union-made stoves. This campaign, which was designed not so much to increase the demand for the label as for union-made stoves in general, achieved considerable success.

As early as May, 1887, ten local unions were reported as supplying labels to employers in their respective districts. At the 1888 convention President Fitzpatrick stated that since February 14, 1887, a total of 30,000 labels had been issued. By the latter part of 1889 thirty-one firms were using the label. Although it would seem that fair results had been attained in a comparatively short time, there were those who declared that the label was "a most pronounced failure" because it had not been properly advertised. In 1897 only twelve concerns were reported as using the label. In 1903, however, the New England Conference Board was able to state that its activities had resulted in the use of the label by "every stove foundry" within its jurisdiction. In recent years the label has been used by from fifty to seventy firms, chiefly manufacturers of stoves and furnaces.

The results obtained up to 1907 led the Molders in that year to declare the label to be organized labor's most efficient weapon. Much earlier than this, union members held that the label was the only instrument for defense against prison-made castings and stoves. While it is true that the label has brought considerable benefit to the Molders, it has failed in many respects. The machinery branch of the trade in particular has presented difficulties in using the label. In 1895 President Fox explained the situation as follows: "Placing the label on castings and specialty goods has not been successful, because . . . castings, promiscuously made, leave the foundry in an unfinished condition, and are handled by others, and when leaving their hands have no evidence of make discernible, because of the process they are put through to bring them to a finished

state." In the stove branch of the trade the Molders have been handicapped because foundrymen have objected to conspicuous labels on the ground that they detract from the appearance of stoves in the market. Again, as President Fox said in 1895, "while the cigarmakers, printers, and other organizations can point with pride to the success of their label," the Molders "are unable to do the same . . . because the conditions in those trades are more favorable" than in the molding industry. He further said:

The purchase of a cigar calls for a small expenditure of money, and that, too, by a man who may or may not belong to a union; and the same can also be said of a bill for printing, which, if the label does not appear upon it, it is the purchaser's option to decline, as union-labeled cigars and printing can be had almost anywhere. But not so with a stove, which, besides calling for a considerable outlay of money, is generally bought by women, who, no doubt, are controlled more by the price than by any other consideration. Besides this, stoves of certain makes and names have, on account of their superior advantages, established for themselves a trade which the dealers find greatly to their advantage in supplying, because of the demand made for them by their customers, who will have no other.²²

With such conditions existing it is but natural that stove manufacturers should declare that the use of the label is advantageous "only in the few well organized centers."²³

While the Molders have not been as successful as several other unions in their label policy, they have not suffered materially on that account. The Molders have always been a militant organization, depending upon a substantial financial policy and bold strikes for their advance rather than upon the negative boycott of the label. Their main object has always been to bring foundries under union control. Whether such establishments, once unionized, use the label or not, is a secondary matter.

The Boycott.—To a limited extent the Molders have made use of the boycott. For the most part boycotts have been imposed by local unions rather than by the general

²² Ibid., p. 21.

²³ Ibid., 1899, p. 15. So little was the Molders' label known in some quarters that the statement was made at the Connecticut state branch of the American Federation of Labor in 1900 that the Molders did not have such a device.

convention. What was apparently the first boycott ordered by the general convention was instituted in 1867. Prior to the recent legal decisions restricting the use of the boycott on interstate commerce, it was customary to publish the names of boycotted firms in the official union journal for several issues until the boycott had been removed or until it had grown "stale." Generally speaking, the Molders have not found the boycott a very effective instrument. The products of machinery and jobbing shops are used chiefly by manufacturing concerns, railroads, and other enterprises which care little whether castings are made by "fair" establishments or not. It is also difficult to boycott stoves with much success because they are purchased largely by the middle classes who have little interest in the battles of labor organizations, and because they are purchased at long intervals, sell for fairly high prices and are not well suited to the use of the union label. The leaders of the union have always counseled moderation in the use of the boycott and have urged that it be employed only as a last resort. Perhaps the best known boycott in the molding industry was the one started against the Buck Stove and Range Company in 1906. This boycott was begun by the Metal Polishers and was endorsed by the Molders as a part of the American Federation of Labor when the latter put the firm on its unfair list.

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